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THE KINGDOM *of* WHY



King Danna insisted on Lucile's riding by his side

THE KINGDOM *of* WHY

BEING THE STRANGE STORY OF LUCILE'S ADVENTURES WITH THE SAPIENT
SAGE, THE FOOLISH IDEA, THE STRIPED JESTER, AND OTHER FOLK,
CREATURES, KINGS, BEASTS, BOGIES, WIZARDS AND WITCHES
WHO DWELL IN THAT WONDERFUL LAND

By
STUART B. STONE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
PETER NEWELL

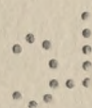


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**TO THE REAL LUCILE
ALMOST-TOO-CANDID CRITIC**

THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED

CHAPTER	PAGE
I THE AMIABLE AERO-COW	1
II UP-ABOVE-THE-EARTH-SO-HIGH	9
III THE MELANCHOLY MONARCH OF WHY	18
IV IDEA LAND	32
V THE WONDERFUL WORD-SHOPS	47
VI THE BOGIES OF THE DISMAL DARKS	61
VII THE GIGANTIC GERMS	74
VIII THE RHYTHMICAL REALM OF RHYMO	87
IX OVER THE RAINBOW	98
X CLOUD LAND	110
XI THE POOLS OF A THOUSAND DREAMS	122
XII THE LAND OF WISH-COME-TRUE	133
XIII INVISIBLE LAND	145
XIV THE MUSICAL LAND OF MEZZO	157
XV THE PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS	170
XVI THE LAND OF DREADFUL STORY-TELLERS	182
XVII THE LAND OF LAUGHS AND TEARS	197
XVIII THE SAPIENT SAGE	208
XIX VERY BAD NEWS	228
XX THE WITCHES' CRANNY	236
XXI THE HEAD-HOPPERS OF THE PURPLE CITY	250
XXII THE END OF IT ALL	267

THE KINGDOM *of* WHY

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

CHAPTER I

THE AMIABLE AERO-COW

On the evening in which the strange things began to happen to Lucile, she was sitting in the library watching her Daddy read from a book with a name containing as many long words as Lucile was years old, which was nine. It was beginning to get dark. Lucile wondered why. In fact, that was what Lucile was always doing—wondering why the things in this big, round, green world are like they are, and why they are not like the things in once-upon-a-time fairy books. So she began to bother her father with questions.

“Daddy, does it get dark in China like it does here in Chicago? How big around is the moon? And why do people go to sleep at night?”

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Her father did not answer. He was a very wise man, called a specialist, and he made several thousand dollars a year curing people of diseases with names so long it almost made one sick to hear them pronounced. On long, winter nights, when Lucile would have delighted to play Build-block-palaces-high-as-the-sky and Tell-me-a-story-please-do, her Daddy sat in his leather armchair and read from big, black books with queer pictures of people's eyes and nerves and muscles. Now he merely frowned just as though he was preparing to drop medicine into a man's eye and charge him a hundred and fifty dollars for doing it. But Lucile had hardly commenced to ask questions. There are so many strange things on this earth and, if she did not begin to find out about them, she would never be educated.

"Are you as wise as King Solomon, Daddy?" she pleaded. "And did Solomon know every teeny, tiny thing that ever happened in this wide world?"

Her father looked over the edge of the big, black book. "Matilda," he said to Lucile's mother, who sat

THE AMIABLE AERO-COW

crocheting, "what will that child want to know next? How can I study, with her popping questions at me all the time? I wonder where she got her inquisitiveness."



Peter Newell

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"I wonder, myself," answered Mrs. Lawrence, shaking her head.

And Lucile wondered, too. There were ever so many things she had wished to ask about—why it rained when she wished to play outdoors with her goat—where the rainbow stayed in dry weather—where all the long ophthalmia and trichiasis words came from—and why the stars twinkled. But she did not wish to worry her Daddy or make him frown. So she went back into the kitchen, and leaning out the window, watched Jupiter, her pet goat, lick at the red letters on a soap advertisement that had blown into the back yard. She wondered why Jupiter liked red things instead of purple and blue and canary-colored objects. She would have asked him why, if a goat could have answered a question. She would even like to ask him who were his parents, and if he was a Republican or a Democrat, and why he didn't get his funny whiskers cut.

She was thinking of all these things when, looking up suddenly, she saw that in the twinkling of an eye Jupi-



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

ter had grown to five or six times his usual, week-day size. His horns pointed to one side and slightly forward, instead of curling back as they had always done. And he was all red and brown, instead of pure white as she had seen him but a moment before. Lucile rubbed her eyes and gasped in astonishment. Then she saw that it was not Jupiter at all, but a cow—a very strange, friendly-appearing cow, which actually smiled and nodded to her. The cow wore big goggles like those worn by the chauffeurs who drive the automobiles, a rubber-and-brass honker, and a queer glass tube filled with ink and fastened to her side. Upon her broad back two cushioned seats were arranged.

“Who in the world are you?” asked Lucile, without stopping to consider that cows can not speak the English language or any other known human tongue.

To her immense surprise, the cow bowed her big head almost to the ground and said in a soft, moo-like voice.

“I am the Cow-that-Jumped-Over-the-Moon, Miss Lucile. All aboard!”

“All aboard!” repeated Lucile, almost too wonder-struck to speak. “All aboard for where?”

THE AMIABLE AERO-COW

“For Atmosphere, Sunset, Cloud Heights, Rainbow and the Kingdom of Why,” answered the cow. “Climb up before it gets dark.”

“But why?” puzzled Lucile.

“Why?” repeated the cow, frowning. “There you go. You’re not in the land of Why yet, and still you’re talking about it.”

The cow, who had an extremely long, red tongue, was reaching around to lick her sleek sides. Suddenly Lucile screamed: “Look out there! Oh, do be careful!”

Jupiter, seeing the bright red tongue, had reached out to take a nibble. The cow had withdrawn it just in time.

“He’s very fond of anything red,” explained Lucile. “I wonder why—” Then she checked herself, remembering how the cow had frowned when she had mentioned the word “why”.

“Come,” commanded the cow. “It will be so dark presently I can’t see the ink in my barograph.”

Lucile, without the slightest idea of where she might

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

be going, climbed into the front seat upon the cow's back. She wondered what a barograph was—she wondered why a cow should wear goggles and have a platform built upon her back. She wondered about all kinds of things, but she dared ask only one question.

“Where was it you said we were going?”

“Oh, to see the Sapient Sage of Why, the Imperial and Exalted Thinker-up of Wise Answers to Silly Questions,” said the cow. “He will tell you everything you wish to know, without your worrying your father half to death with foolish inquiries. Hold tight—we're off!”

The cow crouched down, gave a gentle spring, and immediately Lucile found herself mounting easily in the gathering dusk above the gable roof of her home. Before she had time to realize that she had not even told her parents good-by, the roof of her house was just like a little square on a big checker-board made of the roofs of all the houses. Looking behind her for an instant, she saw that Jupiter had climbed into the rear seat and was nibbling at the red plush on the back.

CHAPTER II

UP-ABOVE-THE-EARTH-SO-HIGH

They floated upward so easily and smoothly that Lucile did not feel the least bit uncomfortable. In fact, she was really enjoying the novel experience of sailing swiftly and steadily up toward the bright twinkle-stars and the huge foam-clouds that looked like mountains of pink-and-white soap-suds drifting across the sky. She wondered greatly, however, that a big, heavy animal, like the cow, without wings, could fly so easily. And finally she could not keep from asking:

“Won’t you tell me how you learned to fly, Mistress Cow?”

The cow laughed in her gentle, moo-like way. “It’s easy—when you know how,” she replied.

“But how—please tell,” pleaded Lucile. “You see,

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

if I knew how to fly, I could make short cuts across the tops of the houses when I go to school."

The cow nodded gravely. "All there is to do is to overcome gravity."

"What is gravity?" asked Lucile.

"Gravity is the thing that holds people and houses to the earth," replied the cow. "If it were not for gravity, you might have been pulled off the world and shot up here into the sky long before I came for you."

"But how did you overcome the grav—the gravity?" persisted Lucile.

"I swallowed it," said the cow. "And the minute I had it down, up I went, zizz-whizz-whirr-boom-booloo, clean and clear over the moon. You see, I had no idea of jumping over it. The whole thing was an accident. And then Mother Goose had to make a song of it."

"But what is gravity like?" insisted Lucile. "Is it good?"

"Is it red?" broke in a baa-like voice just behind her.

UP SO HIGH

Lucile almost fell from her seat. How and where Jupiter had learned to talk she could not imagine, but then she was almost past wondering at things. She guessed that he had caught the trick from the cow in the strange way that animals have of communicating with one another.

“Look,” called the cow suddenly, “we have caught up with the sunset. See the long, slanting rays of colored light!”

And, indeed, they had mounted so high that they could see the sun which long ago had disappeared from Chicago. Long, splendid bars of light—all golden and pink and purple and red—streamed toward them out of the western sky. It was far prettier than the pictures by famous painters that Lucile had seen in the art galleries.

“Yum-yum!” said Jupiter, smacking his lips. “I wish we could get close enough to get a taste of those red rays. I have always craved to eat a sunset.”

Suddenly the cow came to a standstill, so that Lucile wondered if anything could be the matter. The

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

cow, reaching her head around, looked at the ink in the glass tube which hung at her side.

"It's all right," she assured. "I'm just looking at the barograph."

"Barograph," repeated Lucile. "Oh, can I send a message to Daddy?"

"Barograph—not telegraph!" bawled the cow. "A



barograph is a glass tube filled with ink which shows how high you are in the air. They have them on all the aeroplanes."

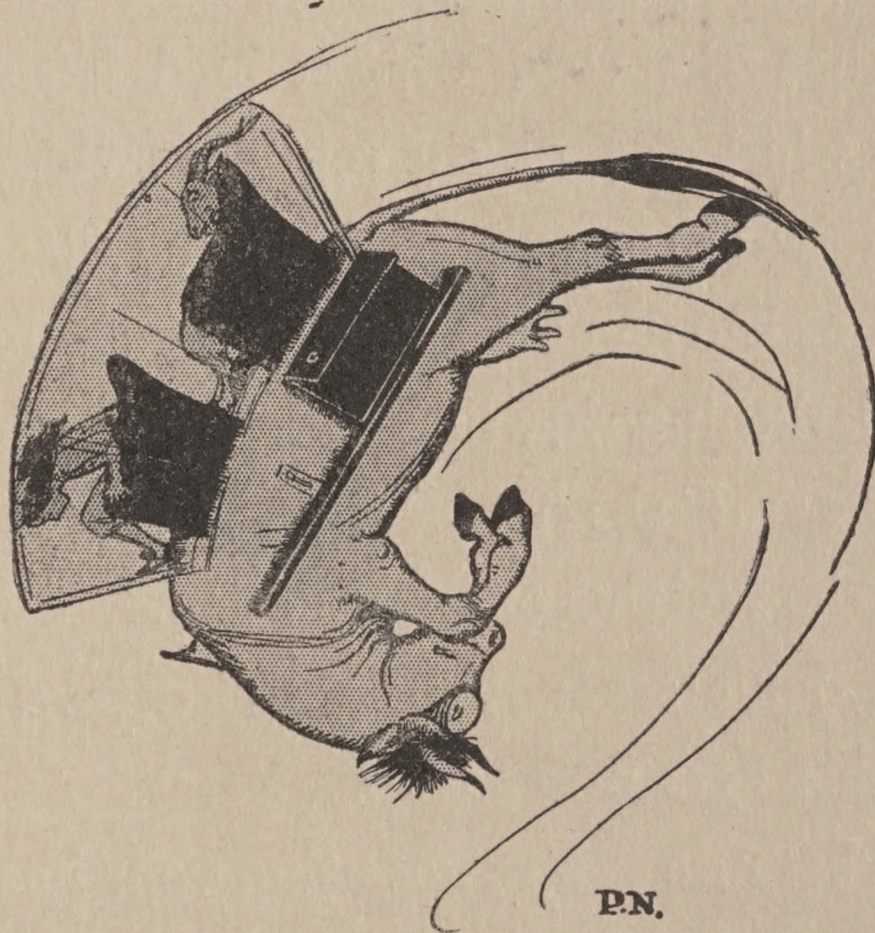
Lucile clapped her hands. "I wish I could ride in an aeroplane."

"Humph!" grunted the cow in an offended manner.

UP SO HIGH

“There never was an air-ship that could take you this high—and, besides, they’re all the time falling and splattering around. And I never do that. I’ll show you what an aero-cow can do.”

Before Lucile and Jupiter realized what she was about, the cow touched her tongue to a spring in her side, releasing a kind of automobile-top made of glass which buckled securely all about the seats and held



them firmly in. Then the cow began to turn somersaults in the air, to make long dips and dives and leaps and whirligigs and shoot-the-chutes, so that half the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

time Lucile's head was down and the other half up. The stars were going around and around, and part of the time the earth was above them and part of the time beneath. Lucile could hardly get her breath and her sides were getting sore from being knocked against the sides of the glass top.

"Please, please stop!" she shouted. "I didn't mean to brag on air-ships. They're not half so good as an air-cow." Then the cow, who seemed better pleased, ceased to whirl around, the top was swung back, and they continued to ascend smoothly and pleasantly.

After they had mounted steadily for a long time into the ever-darkening sky, the cow stopped again.

"Here we are!" she cried shrilly. "Have your tickets ready for the Heights of Imagination."

"But I don't see any heights," answered Lucile, straining her eyes into space.

"That's because you're not using your imagination," replied the cow. "We can't go a step farther until you do. Try now. Can't you see something that looks like a golden stairway out there? Shut your eyes and try—try hard."

UP SO HIGH

Lucile closed her eyes tight, and presently she was able to see a broad, shining flight of golden stairs running up and up and up without any end.

"Keep 'em shut," said the cow, "and we'll go up." And Lucile felt the cow jump up step by step as long as she kept her eyes shut. As soon as she opened them, the cow stopped again.

"Now we have come to the Gulf of Probability," she announced.

"Dear me," pouted Lucile, "you can't get across a gulf unless you have a bridge or a steamboat."

"Oh, yes, you can," advised the cow. "All you have to do is to believe something impossible."

"But that's impossible!" exclaimed Lucile.

"Exactly," said the cow. "Now quick—you must try to believe black is white—or that you are eating three little pieces of green sugar—or that you can hear the stars singing. Be quick. We can't get over the Gulf until you do."

Then Lucile tried hard, very hard, to believe one of the things the cow had mentioned, and finally she

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

did think she could hear the twinkle-stars singing "Ring around a Rosey." For almost anything is easy to believe when you are riding witchwise across the sky on the back of a talking cow. Then the cow gave a terrific leap so that Lucile's long, brown hair streamed back into Jupiter's eyes. It lasted but a min-



ute and Lucile knew they had crossed the great Gulf. She felt very tired and sleepy from straining her mind to believe such impossible things. So she cuddled up into her seat, and in another minute she heard the stars singing "Rock-a-bye-baby" and the "Slumber Song" and then "Now I lay me down to sleep." And finally Lucile went to sleep while they sailed up—up—up,

UP SO HIGH

past the thunder and lightning and clouds and stars and sky. When she at last awakened, it was broad daylight and the cow was standing lazily upon solid ground as blue as the everlasting sea.

CHAPTER III

THE MELANCHOLY MONARCH OF WHY

Lucile stepped down from the cow's back and stretched her cramped limbs. For a moment she thought she must be wearing a pair of the blue goggles that people wear after they have had the measles. For the ground, the hills, the grass, the trees were blue as the noonday sky, a bunch of violets or the contents of a package of bluing. Even the air was a thinnish, smoky kind of blue.

"This is enough to give anybody the blues," the goat growled disgustedly. "I don't believe there's a good, sweet streak of red in the whole country."

Lucile could hear a faint, sweet music on every hand. She was about to ask the cow as to the cause of the pleasant sounds when the friendly animal explained.

"In Chicago, the steam engines and locomotives go chug-chug or puff-puff or choo-choo. Up here the machinery makes music instead of hissing and snorting.

THE MONARCH OF WHY

That which you hear now is 'Mistress Mary, Quite Contrary,' and it is ground out by the engines that keep the movable roads going."

Lucile noticed that the beautiful, blue country was streaked in every direction with smooth highways of a deeper purple shade, all of which were moving steadily toward a great, circular wall enclosing a distant city of magnificent domes, steeples and towers. Seated on chairs and couches upon these roads were the people who inhabited this strange land, a tribe of little men and women about a head shorter than Lucile and who wore brightly colored robes and seemed exceedingly cheerful and talkative.

"The movable highways run to the Purple City," explained the cow. "We must go there first."

They proceeded across a strip of the blue grass and stepped easily upon one of the moving roads. As they passed beneath the thick avenues of trees that lined the highway, Lucile observed bright sticks of peppermint, fat, white marshmallows, candy canes and all kinds of bonbons dangling from the branches.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Somebody has been having a Christmas tree outdoors," she said, with a sigh, for her long ride had made her hungry.

The cow chuckled heartily. "Then it's Christmas time every day in the land of Why, for all the trees bear candies and cakes and ice-cream. You can help yourself if you like."

Lucile reached up, and plucking a candy zebra, began to munch the delicious confection. Jupiter hastily



THE MONARCH OF WHY

followed her example, being careful to select the sweetmeats with the broadest red stripes.

Looking to the right and left, Lucile was greatly surprised to observe that all the houses were built of huge wooden blocks with letters, words and pictures on the faces. The churches, for instance, were arranged so that the letters in the steeple spelled the name, like this:



A building, which the cow said was a dairy, was made of blocks with pictures of milk-cans and churns and ice-cream freezers. A schoolhouse was constructed of blocks bearing pictures of dunce-caps, globes and 6's, 7's and 8's. Now and then they crossed fragrant, strangely-tinted creeks or brooks, which the cow explained were streams of molasses, caramel sauce or soda-water.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

After they had ridden for half an hour, they arrived at the great, circular wall, which proved to be a solid mass of brilliant turquoise. A little soldier, who stood guard at the gate, stopped them.

"Blickum," he said to the cow.

"Whoopel-tickum-ti," answered the cow.

The guard turned to Lucile. "Poppel-foss!" he whispered.



THE MONARCH OF WHY

“Rinktum-sniddles,” said Lucile, without the least idea why she was saying it.

“That will be the password for you every time you enter the Purple City,” explained the cow, “because it is the first word you said on entering the first time. But I must leave you here, as cows are not usually allowed in the city.”

Lucile and Jupiter bade the cow an affectionate farewell and followed the little soldier into the Purple City. There were hundreds and hundreds of houses, with wonderful curves and domes and spires and arches and minarets like Lucile had seen in the pictures of Moscow and Constantinople in the geographies. The streets, all of which kept moving like the roads outside, were filled with the cheerful, little people of Why. In the center of all was a great square or plaza and in the midst of this a noble building, which the guard explained was the palace of King Danno of Why.

Within the palace the soldier conducted Lucile and Jupiter to a great, central chamber paved with marble

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

and onyx and having a splendid, lofty dome of purest gold. The vast room was thronged with richly-dressed courtiers, who strolled to and fro and kept up a continuous murmuring and whispering. On a throne at one end of the chamber sat a little, lean man attired in a purple robe trimmed with diamonds, rubies, pearls and other precious stones. Upon his head was a wonderful crown of gold. Running up from the center of the crown was a glass bulb containing an electric light, and this changed color every minute—red, pink, green, orange, blue and lavender. But the most remarkable thing about the King of Why, Lucile thought, was the look of unhappiness upon his face. His lower jaw drooped, his eyes were big and sorrowful, and his face had grown almost as long as his body. Lucile could not help but feel sorry for him, although she could not understand why the King of this beautiful country could ever feel sad.

The King sat mournfully watching a queer, slender courtier, who was doing the most extraordinary things before the throne. The courtier wore a red cap with

THE MONARCH OF WHY

three star-like points, on the ends of which were bells. He had on a suit of nine colors, wound closely around him in stripes like the arrangement on a barber's pole. The guard told Lucile that this was the Royal Jester of Why, and that he had been trying for five years to make the King laugh, but had never succeeded in making His Majesty crack a smile.

The Jester stood upon his head and hopped in this fashion around the room. Then he came, and standing before the King, made the awfulest faces that Lucile had ever seen. He pulled his red nose until the point was a foot in front of his face, twisted it about and wrapped it around his neck. He would jump high into the air, and dropping to the floor, bounce again and again as high as the ceiling. Finally he closed his mouth and began to draw in air through his nose. He kept this up until he became perfectly round like a ball, and then he rolled rapidly around the chamber, knocking the courtiers right and left. Lucile wondered how a jester or any one else could do so many ridiculous things with his body. She could not understand why

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

the King did not laugh—and the courtiers also, for they were as solemn as the King. Lucile could not restrain her laughter, but giggled and gurgled hysterically.

After the Jester had knocked down and rolled over every one in the room except Lucile, the guard and Jupiter, the King called for him to cease.

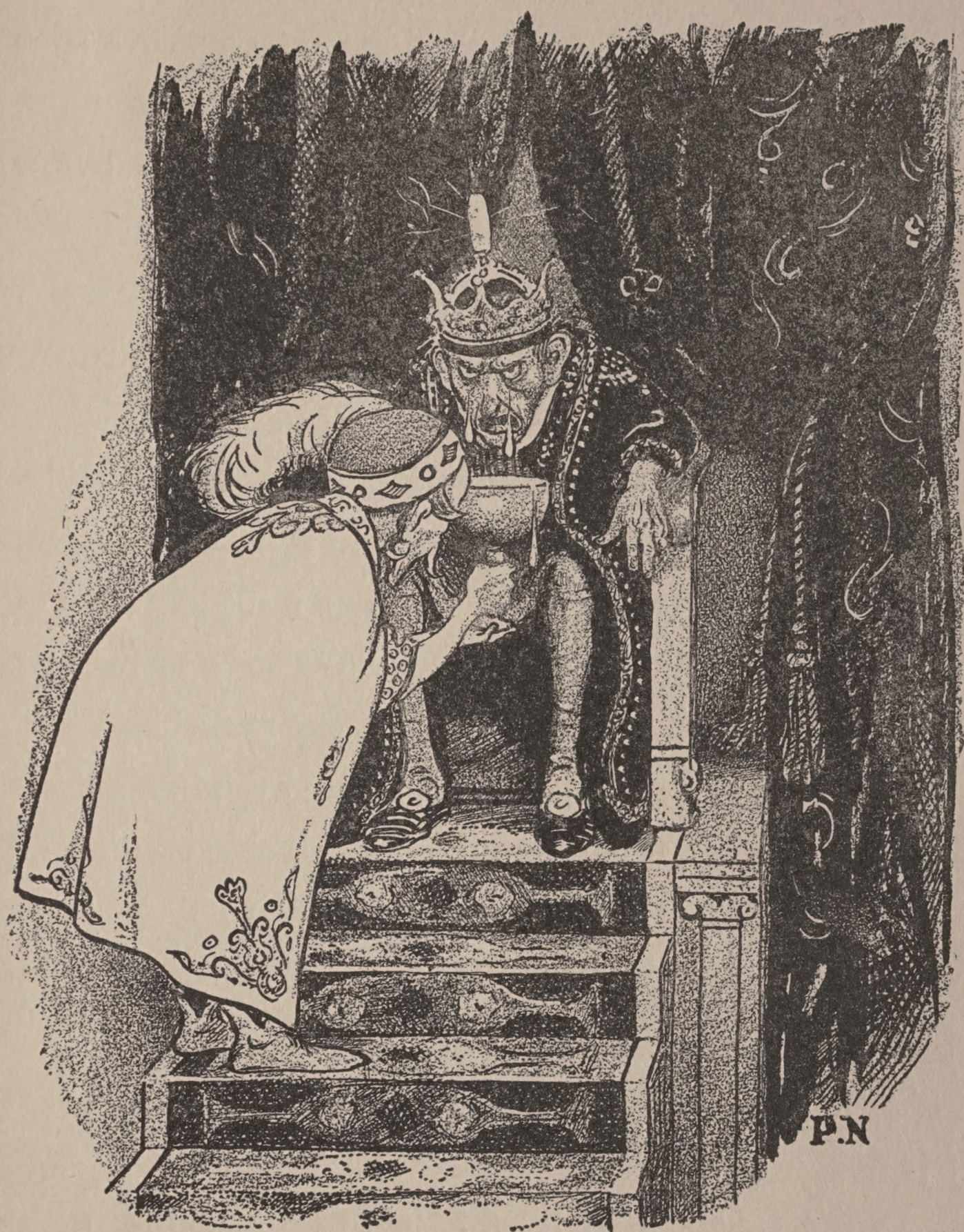
“It isn’t a bit of use,” said His Majesty. “I feel sadder than ever.” Then the Jester stole away, and as he passed Lucile, she saw how it was that he could do such extraordinary things. For he was made of india-rubber.

When the Jester had gone, a pretty, young herald with a golden horn conducted Lucile and Jupiter to the space before the throne.

“This is the Princess Muffett of Muscatine,” announced the herald.

“No, no,” corrected Lucile. “I’m not a princess—I’m just Lucile.”

“Sh-h-h-h!” warned the herald. “You’re in the Kingdom of Why now and you must have a new name and title.”



THE MONARCH OF WHY

The herald continued speaking. "The Princess Muffett and her friend and pet, Sir Gonzales Goat, have come all the way from Chicago to find out lots and lots of things from the Sapient Sage."

The King, who had been watching Lucile closely, began to weep, while a courtier ran up and caught the salty tears in a goblet of gold.

"There it is," sobbed King Danno, "more trouble. The Sapient Sage became wearied at having to answer so many foolish questions and fled to a distant part of the kingdom. And I suppose I'll have to be answering a lot of silly inquiries myself. Dear me—boo-hoo!"

His Majesty began to weep so rapidly that the golden goblet ran over and four more courtiers brought in a golden tub to catch the overflow. After he had wept the tub heaping full, he seemed slightly relieved and turned once more to Lucile.

"I will answer one question for you—just one, mind."

In the constant excitement through which she had been passing, Lucile had forgotten all the questions

THE MONARCH OF WHY

she had ever desired to ask her Daddy. So that now she could think of but one thing, and, indeed, she wished to know that thing very much.

“Why are you so unhappy?” she asked King Danno.

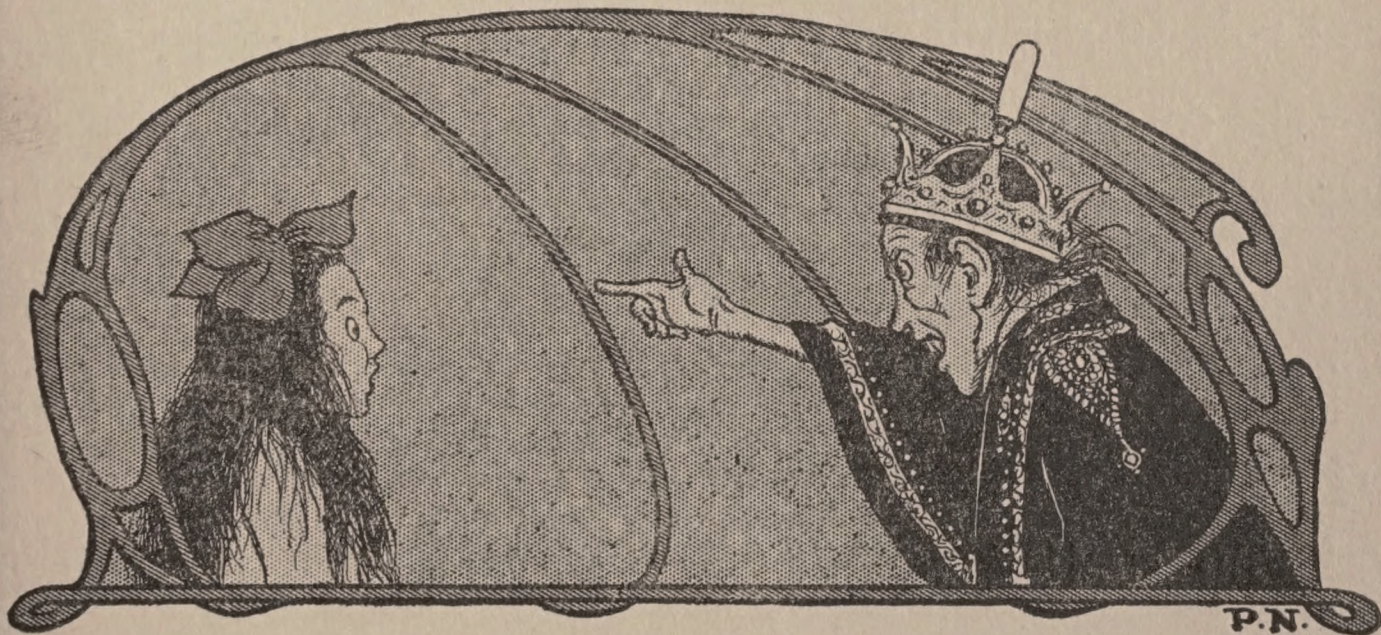
The King groaned. “You have heard the old saying, ‘Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown?’ ”

Lucile nodded, for she remembered Miss Curtis had written the sentence on the blackboard once in the English class.

“Well, that’s one reason,” said the King, “but the main thing is the problems.”

“Oh, problems,” said Lucile, very sympathetically. “Problems are hard. I’ve had lots at school.”

“No, no—not that kind,” declared the King. “It’s



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

the problems of state—how to make peppermint sticks grow on lemon-drop trees—what color to paint the Kingdom of Why every year—what to do when it rains pollywogs—and how to tell the cats from the caterpillars. It's all those kinds of things."

Lucile remained silent, for she was very sorry for the unhappy King. Suddenly the melancholy monarch pointed his finger at her.

"Lemons and licorice!" he shouted. "Why couldn't you be Queen of Why?"

"Oh, dear, no!" cried Lucile. "I'm an American girl, and in America we do not have any queens."

"Turnips and tarts!" shouted the King. "You're in Why now. I know what I'll do. I'll resign and you can rule in my place. You must get a new silk dress for the coronation, and we'll call you Queen Sugar-and-Spice-and-Everything-Nice the Fourteenth. Then maybe I'll be happy."

"But I won't be queen," declared Lucile, about to cry.

"You shall!" stormed King Danno. "Here," he

THE MONARCH OF WHY

called to the palace guards, "take this naughty Queen and put her in prison until she learns what's what."

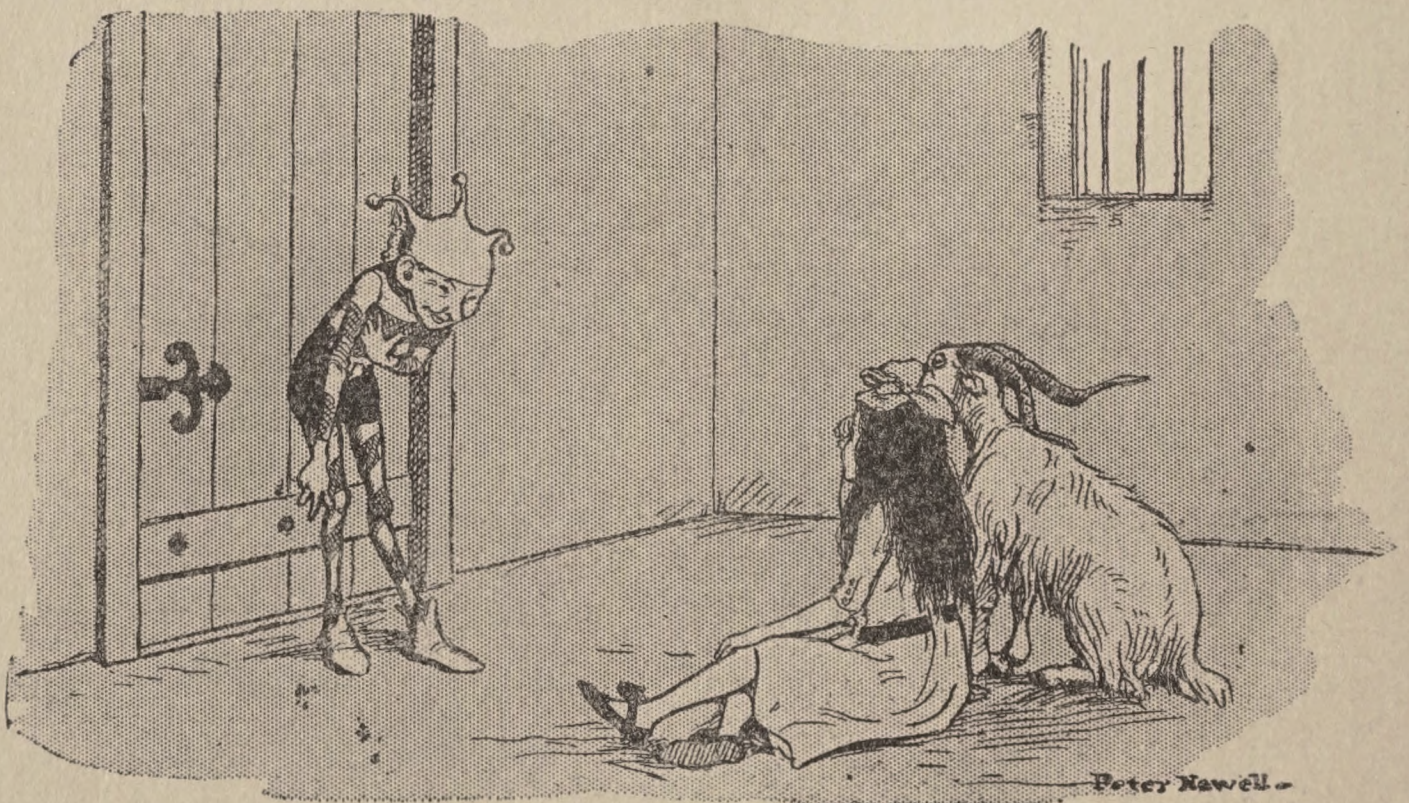
The guards seized Lucile and hurried her and the wondering Jupiter to a little, bare room with a single window set with iron bars, where they left the prisoners to eat a meal of candy Jack-and-the-beanstalks and ice-cream orang-outangs, and to think things over. Then for the first time since the coming of the aero-cow Lucile had leisure to long for her Daddy and mother so far, far away in busy Chicago. Thus the day passed, the dusk came, and Lucile sobbed herself to sleep.

CHAPTER IV

IDEA LAND

Early next morning Lucile was awakened by the faintest, sweetest-toned tinkling of little bells. Rubbing her eyes, she saw that the Royal Jester had entered the prison-room and was bowing and skipping before her.

“How did you get into this dreadful place with the door locked?” she wondered.



IDEA LAND

The striped Jester laughed. "It's easy when you're made of india-rubber." Then he squeezed himself into a long, thin, bright streak and passed back and forth through the keyhole several times.

"I wish I could do that," said Lucile. "I'd get out of this old jail where the King has put me because I won't be Queen Sugar-and-Spice the Fourteenth."

"Oh, that's easily managed," declared the Jester. "And if you will allow me to go with you in your quest of the Sapient Sage I will get you and Mr. Goat out of jail before you can say 'Boanarges Brimblecorn brought a billion brass buckets of breaded buckwheat by the babbling brook.'"

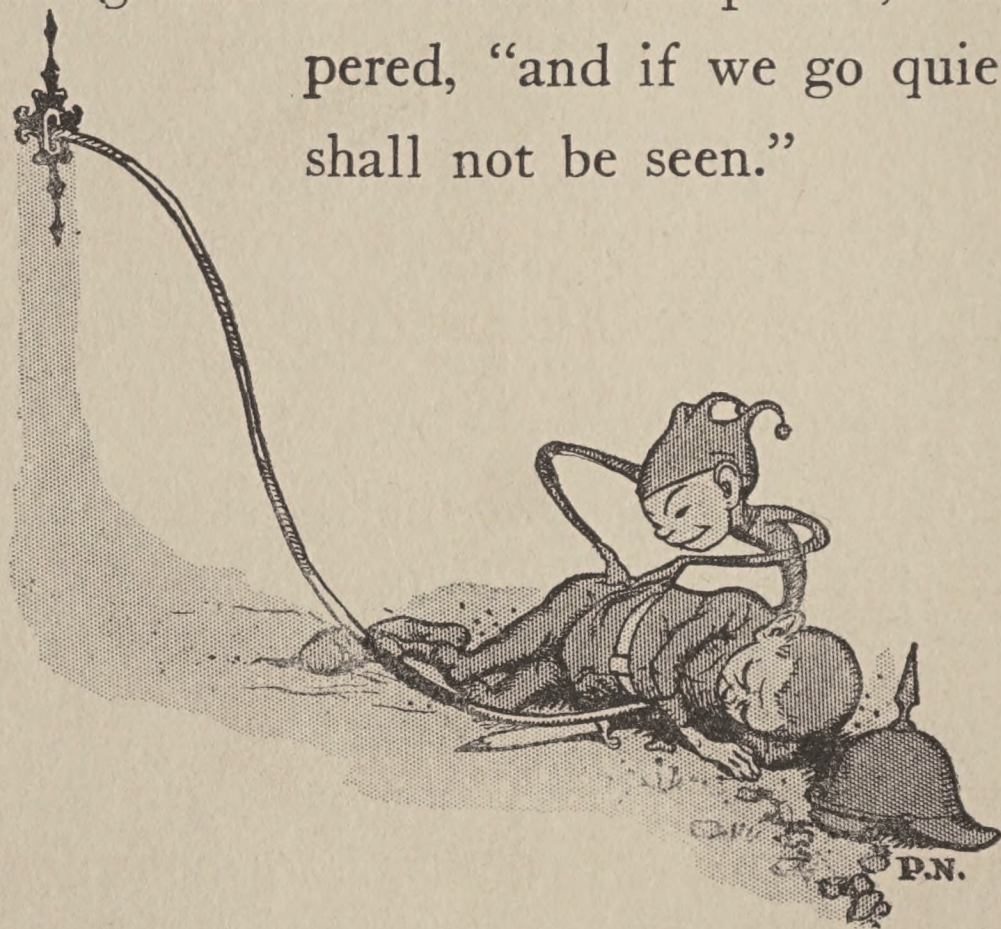
Lucile thought she could have gone through the keyhole herself before she could have uttered the sentence about Boanarges Brimblecorn, but she assured the Jester that she would be very glad indeed to have him accompany her in her search for the Sage.

Then the Jester led her to the window and pointed out one of the guards. The little soldier was soundly sleeping. The Jester, compressing his brightly-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

painted body into a longer, thinner string than ever, wound himself through the keyhole and around the body of the guard until he had found in a pocket the big key that unlocked Lucile's prison. With this he opened the door and motioned to Lucile and Jupiter to walk out.

"The King and the courtiers sleep late," he whispered, "and if we go quietly we shall not be seen."



Thus they passed out of the palace of the King of Why and into the streets of the Purple City where no one paid any heed to them.

When they had reached the movable highways on

IDEA LAND

the blue plain and were eating from the luscious plum-pudding and chocolate-cream trees once more, the Jester explained why he had come to rescue them.

“You see, it’s this way,” he said. “For five years I have been trying to make King Danno laugh. I’ve done the funniest things in the world and been jollier than Old King Cole or Peck’s Bad Boy or Punch and Judy. But it isn’t a particle of use. The King is worried over his problems and won’t laugh, and, because the King doesn’t laugh, the courtiers won’t. You know that is the way of courtiers the world over—to do just like the King. And you are the first person who ever laughed at me. So that I made up my mind, if you would have me, I would go with you in your quest, and possibly the Sapient Sage may tell me how to be really funny.”

He told them that the country to which the Sapient Sage had gone was very far off, that the road thereto ran through many strange lands inhabited by the queerest and most uncertain peoples and abounding with the gravest perils. Also he told them that King Danno

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

would probably pursue them, but that, with the start they had, they might keep ahead of him.

After they had proceeded for a long, long time upon the movable road and the pretty block-houses of the blue country had grown scarcer and scarcer, finally disappearing altogether, the highway descended into a



IDEA LAND

beautiful valley made by a stream, which was blue as far as the middle, and the color of ordinary water upon the other side. The Jester explained that the middle of the stream marked the boundary between the blue country and Idea Land.

Upon the other side of the stream Lucile was surprised to see beautiful buildings of colored brick and stone floating gracefully in the air. The houses drifted easily above the treetops, and at the windows Lucile could see the strangest objects sticking out—lovely paintings, sewing-machines, picture-books, little, steel bridges, toy automobiles, and so on. All of these objects were bobbing and moving about as if they were alive, and Lucile could not understand why they did not fall from the windows of the floating houses.

“Those houses sailing in the air above our heads are the Air-Castles of Idea Land,” explained the Jester.

“But what are all those queer objects in the windows? And what makes them move about so? And how do they keep from falling out?” asked Lucile.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Wait—wait!" laughed the Jester. "I'm not the Sapient Sage."

"Oh," said Lucile, "I beg your pardon."

"That's all right," answered the Jester, "but those are not things—they are people."

"Those books and bridges and pictures can't be people!" cried Lucile, in astonishment.

"Oh, yes, they are," declared the Jester. "They are the Ideas. You see, this is the place where all the Ideas come from. Watch and I will show you how an Idea is made."

The Jester reached up on the front step of one of the floating Air-Castles and took down what appeared to Lucile to be a round, black shot no bigger than a pea. Next he gave his hand a twist, which set the black shot rolling upon the ground. "Watch it grow," he whispered.

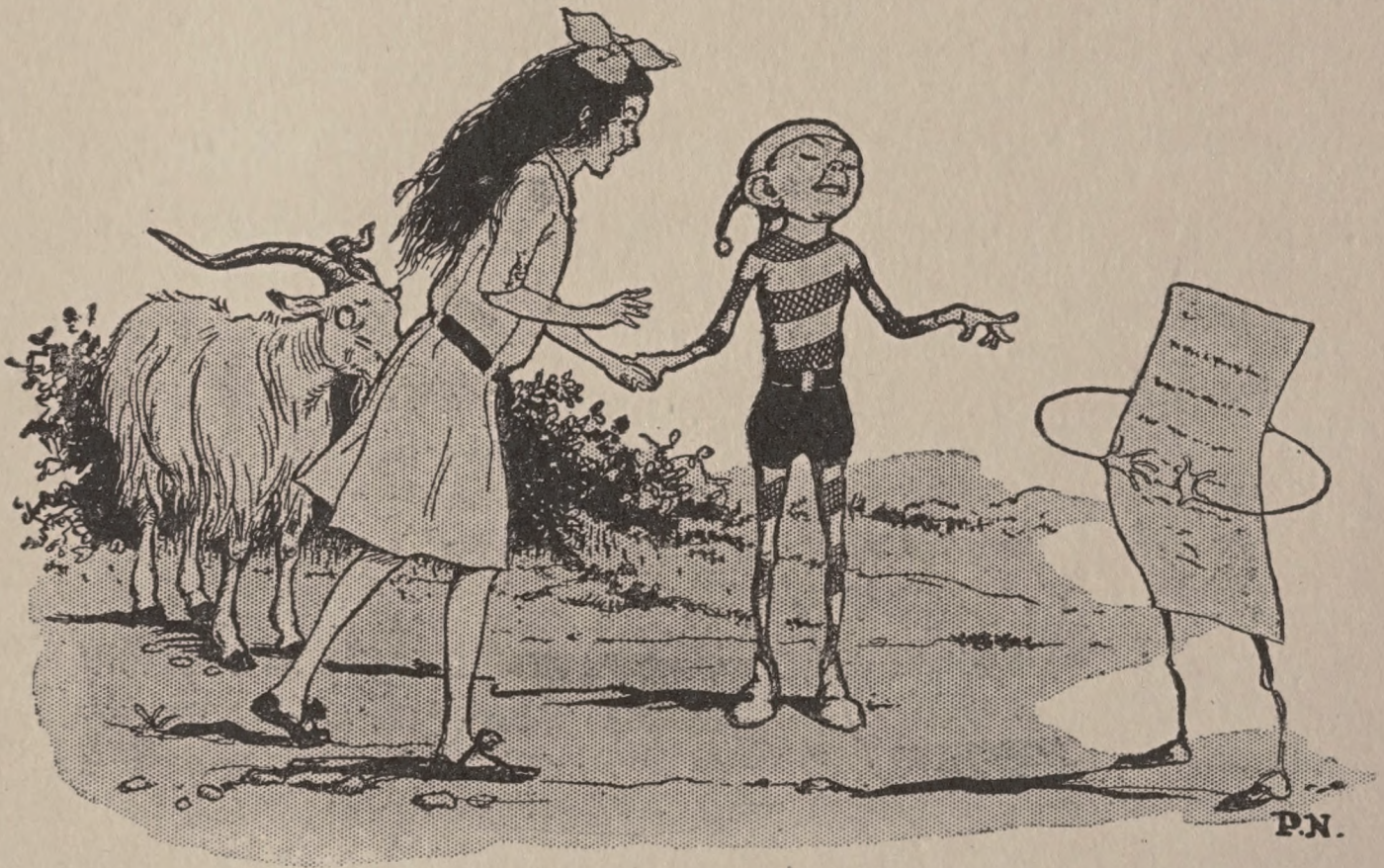
Lucile watched the little black ball as it rolled around and around and she saw that it was certainly getting bigger and bigger.

"That's just the way with an idea, if you ever no-

IDEA LAND

ticed," said the Jester. "At first it doesn't amount to much, but if you keep rolling it around and thinking about it, after a while it'll amount to something."

"Look, look!" interrupted Lucile, grabbing the Jester by the hand. "The ball has changed into a big sheet of paper with words printed on it."



Sure enough the black ball, which had grown to the size of a pumpkin, had suddenly been transformed into a sheet of white paper with a head, arms and legs. On the paper was printed this verse:

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

There was a young girl named Lucile,
Went up on a cowtomobile
To the Kingdom of Why
Where she made the King cry
And loud for his soldiers to squeal.

"It's poetry," cried Lucile, "like 'The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck' and 'Humpty-Dumpty on the Wall.' "

"It is," said the Jester; "now watch."

Even as he spoke the sheet of paper bowed, said "Good-by, Lucile—hope you'll have some good ideas yourself some day," and leaped high into the air, gradually disappearing from sight. As she looked up, she saw that a piano, a plow and a big, black book had also flown into the air.

"Where have they gone?" whispered Lucile, almost scared.

"Gone to pop into some wise men's heads down in Chicago probably," answered the Jester. "You see, after an Idea has been rolled and revolved up here until it amounts to something new and good or beautiful, it goes down into your country and pops into the

IDEA LAND

head of some man who has been thinking along that line and has his brain ready to receive it. Then the man goes ahead and produces whatever the Idea put into his head. People are always saying, 'I have an Idea'; but the truth is, the Idea has them."

"And are all those objects, in the windows of the Air-Castles, Ideas just like the poem?" asked Lucile.

"To be sure," nodded the Jester. "They will go down to the earth, pop into the heads of fellows who have their brains fixed right for them, and then there



THE KINGDOM OF WHY



will be some fine new bridges and pictures and books and machines in the world. But what is the matter with Jupiter?"

Lucile looked around, and was astonished to behold the goat rearing upon his hind legs and wagging his head very wisely.

"I am the King of Idea Land," he bleated. "You are my subjects. Bow low before King Jupiter Goatee!"

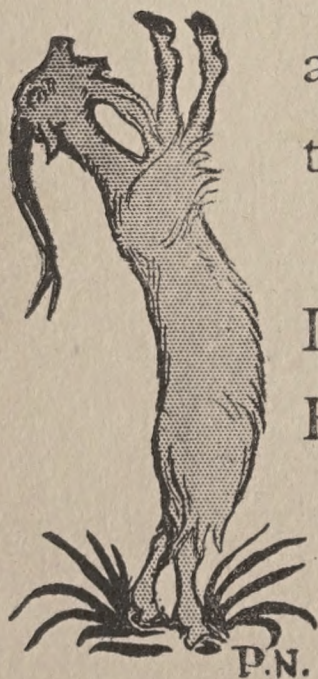


"How foolish!" cried Lucile. "What is the matter—"

Jupiter suddenly lowered his head and rushed at her as if he would butt her with his horns. In all his life the goat had not done such a thing, and Lucile, in a great fright, ran behind a tree. But Jupiter had already ceased to chase her and was shouting up at the Air-Castles.

"Oyez, oyez! Come down from the Air-Castles, oh, Ideas, and bend your knees before Jupiter Junius Jinks, King of Idea Land and all the big and little Ideas!"

Instantly scores of paintings, mouse-traps, fruit-



IDEA LAND

cakes, coffee-pots, street-cars and other things began to jump from the open windows of the Air-Castles. The ground fairly swarmed with them, and the Air-Castles, relieved of their weight, shot far above the trees.

"Bow down—bow down!" cried Jupiter; and he began to butt right and left, knocking down pictures, pots, cakes and traps.

"Jupiter's gone crazy!" screamed Lucile. "Oh, what shall we do!" And indeed it did seem that the goat had gone suddenly insane, for he was jumping high into the air, turning somersaults, and issuing orders to the army and navy and congress of the Ideas just like a real king.

Lucile was ready to burst into tears at the pitiful plight of her good friend when a great tall Idea, composed of a golden crown blazing with gems, strode up to the frantic goat.

"Peace and silence, goat!" commanded the Crown-Idea. "I rule in Idea Land for the King of Why."

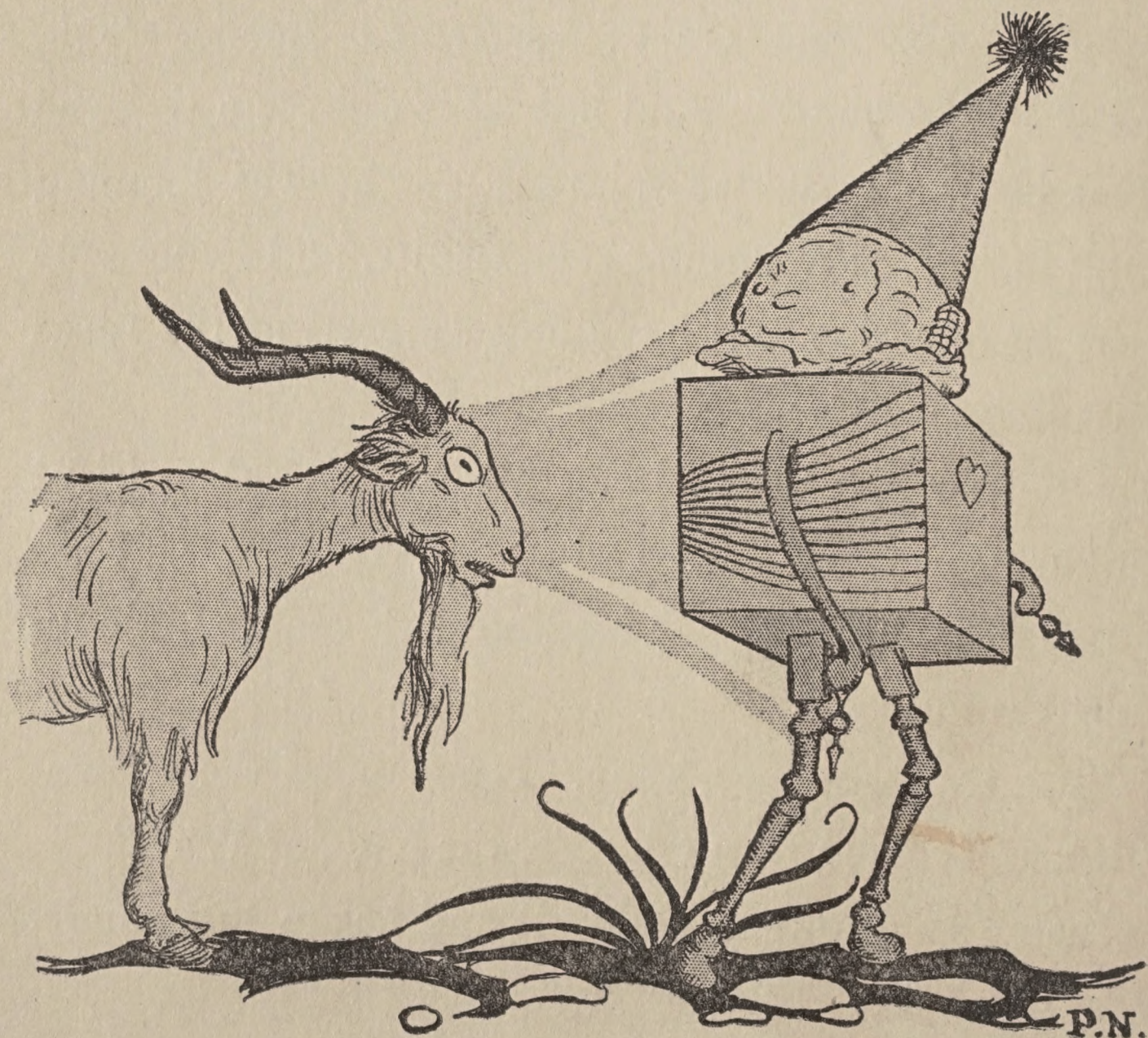
Instantly Jupiter stood still and began to tremble, very much like a badly frightened goat.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Does any Idea here know what is the matter with this goat?” asked the Crown-Idea, looking about.

A pretty Statue-Idea advanced and bowed. “Please, oh, King, I think the Foolish Idea has sprung into the goat’s head.”

“Ah!” said the King of the Ideas. Then he muttered words over Jupiter’s head—“Ricktum-davvy-tally-ho-



P.N.

IDEA LAND

bub"—until suddenly the queerest, funniest-looking Idea they had yet seen appeared just as if he might sure enough have come from the goat's head.

The Foolish Idea's chest consisted of a cedar clothes-chest, with a brass, heart-shaped clasp over the spot where a heart should be and with twelve umbrella-ribs upon each side. On top of this chest was a big, ragged, smiling cabbage-head, with potato-eyes that winked constantly and protruding ears formed of small ears of corn. The Idea's legs seemed to be the round, wooden legs of a table, while his arms were chair-arms, ending in the steel hands of a clock. Upon his cabbage-head reposed a tall dunce-cap.

Jupiter, gazing in horror at the Foolish Idea that had been in possession of his head, crept over to Lucile and the Jester.

"I am very sorry I acted so foolishly," he apologized. "I didn't aim to, but suddenly as I was standing there I thought I was really the King of this land. I am very much ashamed and promise never to do so again."

"Indeed, I am of the opinion that we had better get

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

out of this country as soon as we can," declared the Jester. "For any of us is apt to get the idea into his head that he is Jack-the-Giant-Killer or the Man-in-the Moon."

Lucile thought this excellent advice, and the three of them hurried back to the movable pavement, which soon whisked them away from the floating Air-Castles with their remarkable Idea-dwellers.

CHAPTER V

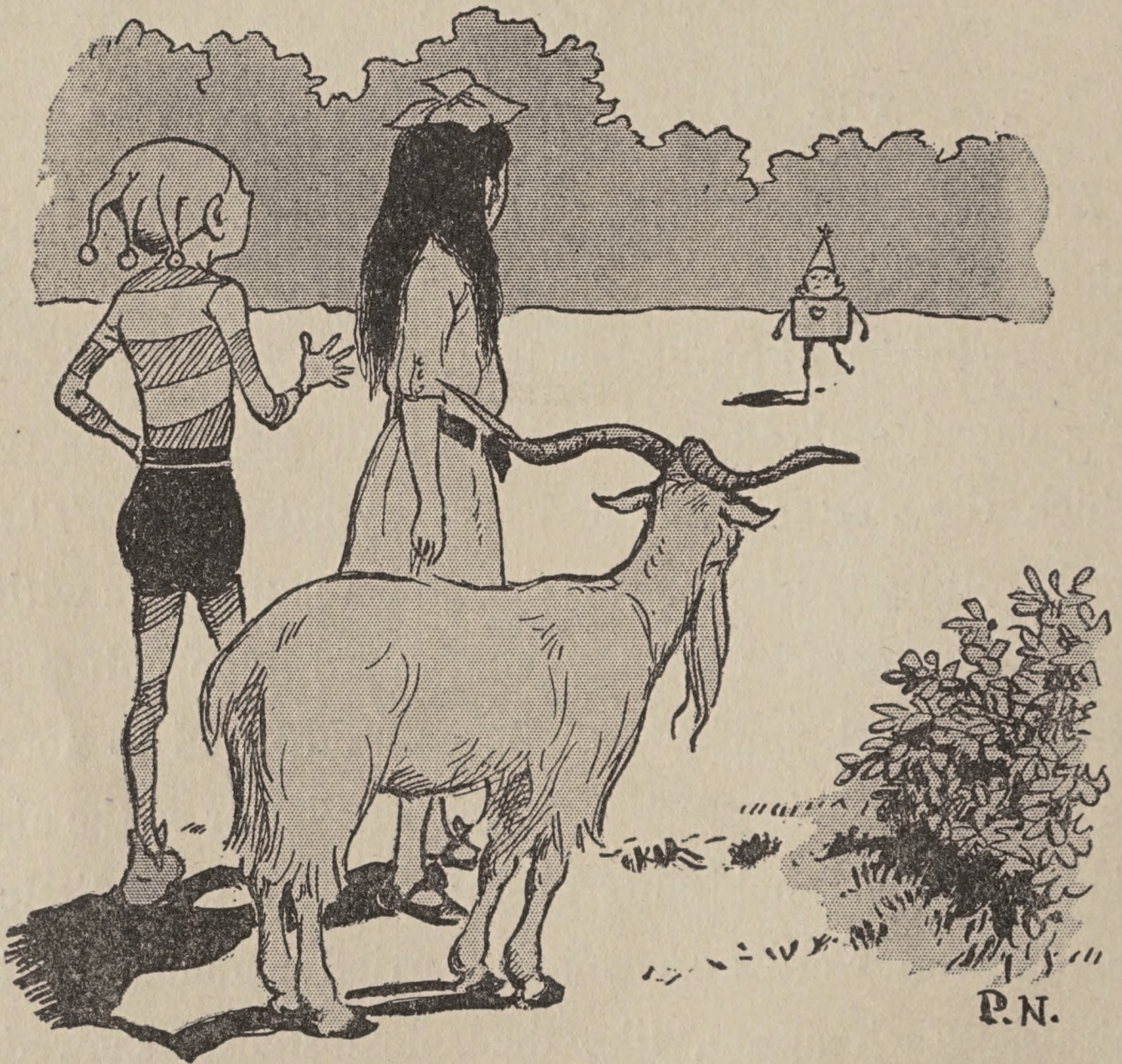
THE WONDERFUL WORD-SHOPS

After sleeping that night upon the soft couches that adorned the movable pavement, the travelers crossed a pretty bridge of pink glass built over a foaming river of custard and entered a beautiful, green country which the Jester explained was Word Land. The fresh, rolling landscape was dotted here and there with tall chimney-stacks from which poured huge volumes of dense, black smoke. Lucile was surprised to note that on each smoke-stack was some one letter of the alphabet. The inhabitants of the country were little people who wore aprons and carried hammers and chisels. Each apron, like the smoke-stacks, showed some one letter.

"These men are the word-carvers," explained the Jester, in answer to Lucile's question. "A 'W' on the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

apron means that the wearer works in the big W factory over there, or if he has an A, he makes A's in this factory to the left."



"How strange," murmured Lucile. "I should like to see them make some words."

"You will," promised the Jester, and he stepped from the pavement.



She passed safely across followed by Jupiter and the Jester

THE WORD-SHOPS

As they walked on in the direction of the big word-factories, there came to them a great clatter as of hammers beating on metal, and Lucile could easily imagine she had dropped back into one of the busiest parts of Chicago.

Suddenly Jupiter, who had been walking along quietly, gave a loud ba-a-a of alarm. Looking back, they beheld the Foolish Idea hurrying to overtake them.

"Oh, dear," cried Lucile, "he will pop into my head and make me do something very, very foolish."

"Or have me thinking I'm the King of Word Land," complained Jupiter.

"Or have me thinking I'm made of diamond dust or peanut brittle instead of india-rubber," said the Jester.

By this time the Foolish Idea had overtaken them. As he observed their troubled expressions, he bowed his ragged cabbage-head to the ground.

"Don't be afraid of me," he pleaded, "please, please don't. I'm only a foolish, little Idea and I got into the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

head of your goat because I thought that was the right thing to do. But I will promise never to do so again."

"But why did you make me try to act as if I was a king?" demanded Jupiter, not much satisfied.

"You see, I'm an Idea—though a very foolish one," explained the newcomer, "and that is what Ideas are for, to spring into heads. But I never seem to make people do the proper thing. Once I got into a man's head and he tried to jump over the moon; another time I made a woman try to boil the sea for dinner; and still another time I caused a woman to try to pickle the



THE WORD-SHOPS

clouds. That is why they call me the Foolish Idea, although my real name is Nic-Nac. And I would like to go with you in your search for the Sapient Sage so that I may learn things and be a wise Idea rather than a foolish one."

After this lengthy explanation they cheerfully accepted the company of Nic-Nac, and all continued their way to the great word-factories.

As they approached one of the central buildings, a man, who had all twenty-six letters of the alphabet upon his apron, came out to meet them.

"We have just received an order for a lot of new words," he explained, after the Jester had told him of their wish to watch the word-making. "These are to be extra long words for the names of new chemicals and drugs. I was just trying to think of some. Maybe you can help me." He looked inquiringly at the Jester.

"How about 'mu-fos-tof-a-billi-kan-ixis,' " suggested the Jester, winking at Lucile.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"That will be fine," said the Chief Word-Maker. Then he nodded to Lucile.

"Winnie-kononnie-whanni-til-opsis," said Lucile, seeing that he especially liked long words.

"Zizz-whizz-app-o-pop-o-delphia," suggested the Foolish Idea.



THE WORD-SHOPS

“Too-loo-koo-bilken-stix-o-malix,” said Jupiter.

“Those will do fine,” declared the word-carver, “although it will take some time to make all the letters.”

As they entered the “A” factory, the Jester whispered to Lucile: “I meant that long word for a joke, but he couldn’t see the point—and now he has a word long enough to choke him. That always was the way with my jokes.”

Inside the first factory, hundreds of the little word-carvers were hammering at long, straight bars of what appeared to be pure gold. Other workmen seized the golden bars as soon as made and set them up on end, in pairs, leaning the tops together. Then, with a third bar connecting them, was formed the letter

A

“Now,” said the Word-Chief, “that is ready to start off new words like Apple-pie-ology and Ant-eater-onomy.”

“Or All-day-sucker-itis,” suggested the Jester.

“Or Angel-food-olatry,” said Lucile.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Or Ax-handle-soup,” put in Jupiter.

“Or Alarm-clock-music-in-A-flat,” chimed in the Foolish Idea.

The travelers were next conducted through the B, C, D and other factories until they had seen all of the word-making they desired. As they were coming out of the place where the funny, twisty S's were manufactured, they heard a series of long blasts on a trumpet. There was a great running about among the little word-makers, and all the whistles on all the great word-factories began to blow just as Lucile had heard them in Chicago, when the clock struck twelve on New Year's Eve.

“What is the matter? What has happened?” demanded Lucile and all her party. They were eager to learn the latest news.

The Word-Chief replied that indeed he did not know; but no sooner were the words out of his mouth than a young word-maker came running.

“King Danno has come!” he cried, in a thin, treble voice. “The King of Why has come to Word Land.”

THE WORD-SHOPS

"The King!" repeated the Word-Chief. "The King has not been in Word Land since I have been chief."

"Dear, dear!" cried Lucile, wringing her hands. "He has come for me. He wishes to make me Queen Sugar-and-Spice-and-Everything-Nice the Fourteenth. And I don't wish to be queen at all."

The Word-Chief scratched his head very thoughtfully. "Then what will you do about it?" he asked.

"I would like to hide or escape," said Lucile. "Can you not help me?"

"Indeed, I could not hide you anywhere in Word Land," declared the Chief, "for the King will have every nook and corner of it searched. And you can not get across the Bottomless Gulf, which separates this land from the Dismal Darks on the South, for there is no bridge."

Lucile was about to cry, the Word-Chief was almost scratching his head off, and the Jester was looking as solemn as if he had never said a funny thing in his life when suddenly the Foolish Idea spoke up.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Why can’t you make a bridge to go over the great gulf?”

“How very foolish!” said the Word-Chief.

“He can’t help it,” explained the Jester. “That’s the kind of an Idea he is.”

“But why not make a beautiful, golden bridge out of one of those long words piled over there?” persisted Nic-Nac.

Lucile and the others followed his gesture to where a great pile of new words was stacked against the T factory—TIDDLE-DY-WINKINESS — TICKLE-LOGY — TERRIBLE-TOTISHNESS —TWIN-ONOMY.

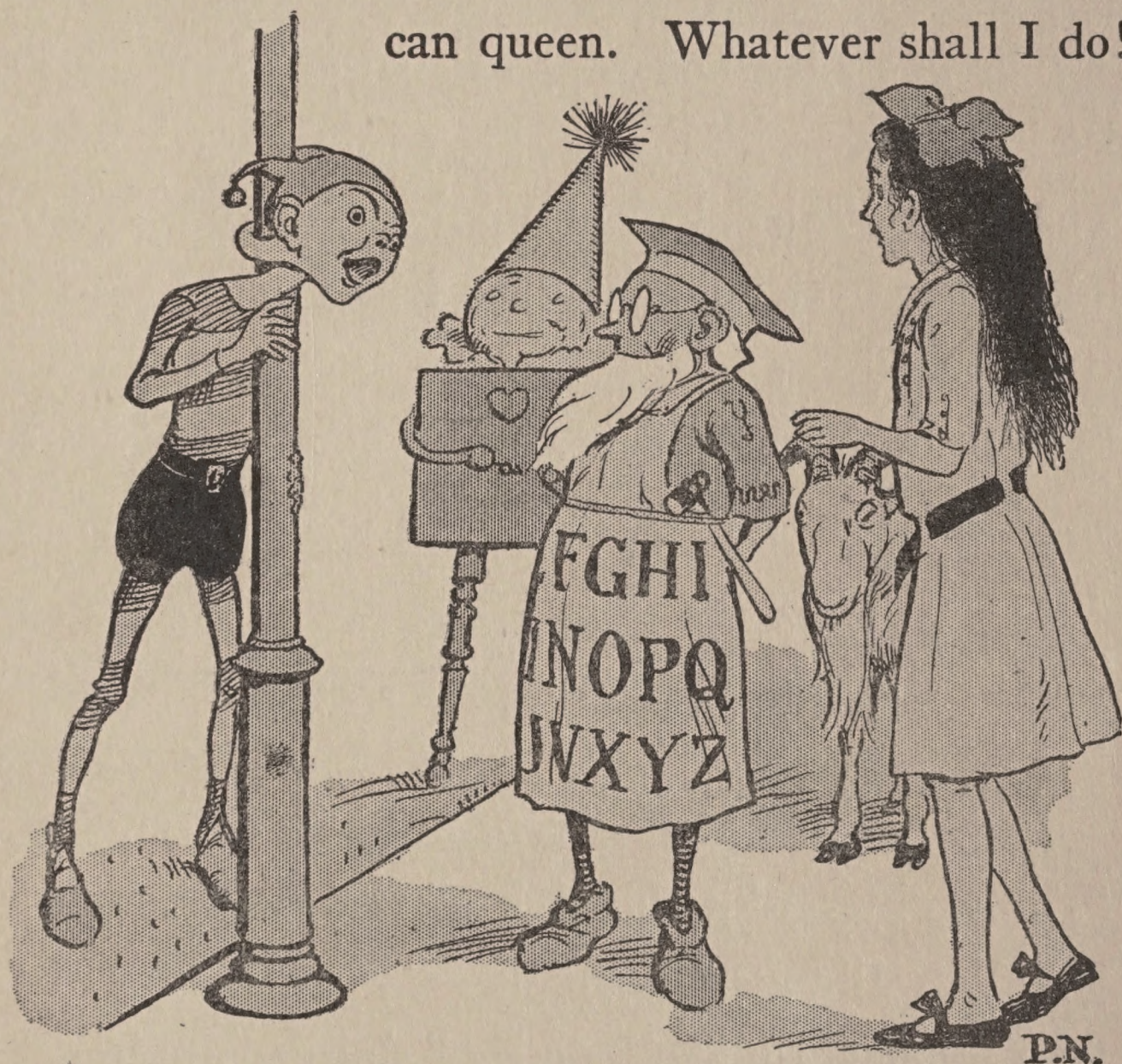
“They would do,” said the Word-Chief, “if they were long enough. But the Bottomless Gulf is very wide and deep and these would not reach half-way across.”

By now there was a great blowing of trumpets and a mighty shouting from the plain over which Lucile’s party had come into Word Land. A little word-maker came running out of breath.

THE WORD-SHOPS

"King Danno has demanded that Lucile be given over to him. He says he can never be happy until he has made her Queen."

"Ooh!" cried Lucile. "There never was an American queen. Whatever shall I do!"



"I tell you," said the Foolish Idea, turning a flip-flap that landed him nearly on top of one of the word-factories. "Let them make a word long enough to cross the great gulf."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

The Word-Chief shook his head. "We haven't any near long enough. That word the Jester gave us this morning is the longest we have and it will not reach nearly across."

"Make one still longer," persisted Nic-Nac, as the noise increased.

The Word-Chief looked up hopefully. "I can't think of one near long enough. But I might start it, and if you—"

"We'll finish it—start her off," whooped the Jester, wrapping his rubber neck around a near-by lamp-post in his excitement.

"All right," said the Chief, "here goes. Animali-culapot—"

"Sassa-lopter-ulamus—" continued the Jester.

"Dinken-hymer-kito-bivalve—" said Lucile.

"Walla-walla-pop-bingulstix—" piped the Idea.

"Goog-hymel-ting-kollopосizz," finished Jupiter.

"Now you run down to the edge of the Gulf and hide in the bushes until we come with the bridge," ordered the Chief.

THE WORD-SHOPS

Then he called to a crowd of the word-carvers who had not gone out to the great plain. The smoke in the big word-factories began to pour forth black and thick, for the making of this extraordinary, long word required the working of almost every factory. Lucile and the others hurried down to the great Gulf, which was so wide they could hardly see the other side, and so deep they could not see the bottom at all. Soon one of the workmen came rushing down with the letter A, which he planted firmly at the edge of the deep ravine. Immediately behind him came another workman bearing the letter N, which he hooked carefully on to the A. Rapidly the great, golden bridge grew, but the noise from the plain came louder and louder. It was evident that the King and his party were coming toward the Gulf. As the last letter—Z—of the long, long word was set in place on the other bank, Lucile began to climb over. She passed safely across, followed by the Jester and Jupiter. But before the Foolish Idea could step upon the bridge the unhappy King had come up and was calling to Lucile to return.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Stop—stop, Queen! Five hundred thousand chocolate-cream drops reward to any one who seizes Lucile!”

As the King opened his mouth to cry still louder, the Foolish Idea, who was standing immediately behind him, seized a small, golden model of the great word ZIMMEL-WIFFUL-WAFFULUM-TOO, which was lying near, and rammed it down the King's throat. Then as the King spat and choked over the long word, Nic-Nac climbed upon the bridge and ran nimbly across. Reaching the other side, he kicked the wonderful, golden bridge until it loosened and fell with an enormous clatter into the Gulf. Thus the longest word that ever was made went to pieces, almost choking up the great Gulf that divides Word Land from the Dismal Darks. And long after Lucile and her companions had left the ravine, they could hear the King spitting and choking in his effort to rid his throat of the long word:

“Oh —ugh —zimmel —wafful —ouch —wifful —oh —too!”

CHAPTER VI

THE BOGIES OF THE DISMAL DARKS

For a long while after the escape from King Danno at the golden bridge the Foolish Idea strutted with his cabbage-head reared back until it almost touched the pavement behind him. When the Jester noticed this, he asked his friend the cause of his sudden pride.

"It's because of that idea I had about the bridge," answered Nic-Nac. "You know, I don't consider that was a foolish idea at all."

"It was not one bit foolish," declared Lucile, warmly, "and if you continue to have such ideas they will have no right to call you a Foolish Idea any more."

"Thank you," said Nic-Nac. "I will try very hard never to be foolish again." And he strutted until he tumbled back upon his head and had to be rescued by the Jester.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

After riding for an hour upon the moving highway, the pilgrims decided to leave it for a short walk through a pleasant, little valley lined with gorgeous hedges of wonderful flowers. They had proceeded about half-way down the incline when the Foolish Idea looked up at the sky.

"Do you know, I believe it's getting dark," he said.

"There you go with your foolish ideas again," answered the Jester. "It's only nineteen minutes, twenty-three and three-fourth seconds and three ticks past two o'clock in the afternoon."

But Lucile, who had also been gazing skyward, shook her head. "I'm afraid he's right about it. It's getting quite dusky."

There was no longer any doubt about the matter. It was just as if some mighty giant was drawing a huge curtain over the sun.

"It must be an eclipse of the sun," said Lucile. "They have them in the almanacs along with the jokes and medicine advertisements."

The Jester stretched at his bright-colored rubber



THE DISMAL DARKS

neck until his head rose far above the highest treetops. Then he relaxed and came down with a sigh.

"I've been up to have a good look," he announced. "It's just as I feared. The Duke of the Dismal Darks is pulling the sun-curtains."

"Pulling the sun-curtains," echoed Lucile. "What are sun-curtains, anyhow?"

"This is the Domain of the Dismal Darks," explained the Jester, "and it is ruled by a Duke, a very powerful magician who has constructed a set of immense, black curtains completely enclosing the land. Whenever he wishes to make it dark, he pulls the curtains—there they go! Now you couldn't see an elephant with a spy-glass."

Everything had suddenly turned black—black as a piece of coal, black as midnight or copying ink, black as a black cat. Lucile could not see the rainbow-colored Jester, the Foolish Idea, the faithful Jupiter, not even her hand before her face.

"Ooh!" she cried. "I wish I was back home. I was

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

always afraid of the dark. What in the world are we to do?"

"We shall probably get lost," said the Jester. "Let us all take hold of hands so that we can keep together."

Lucile groped about her until her right hand clasped a soft, spongy, rubber hand she knew to be the Jester's, and her left a piece of steel wire she knew for the Foolish Idea's. At the same time she felt the tug of Jupiter's teeth on her short skirt.

"Let's turn around and feel our way back to the golden bridge," suggested Nic-Nac. "Then I will be sure to think up another brilliant idea to get us past this awful blackness."

"Let's sit quite still, and maybe after a while the Duke will draw back the curtains," advised Lucile. "That is the way eclipses do back in the United States."

"I wish all this black was red," whimpered Jupiter. "It would make a lot of fine nibbling."

"No, what we must do is to go on," declared the

. THE DISMAL DARKS

Jester. "The road lies straight ahead like a bee line, and we oughtn't to miss it. Besides, they say the Duke allows it to remain dark for weeks and months at a time."

The comrades, keeping well together, slowly made their way ahead. The Jester, who led the way, would stretch his neck far ahead in order to feel out the road between the fragrant hedges.

They had not proceeded far when Lucile felt something touch her lightly on the shoulder.

"Who touched me?" she asked quickly.

"Who touched me?" asked the Jester, almost at the same moment.

"And me?" echoed the Foolish Idea.

"And me?" bleated Jupiter.

Instantly there arose the most frightful sound of howling and shrieking and wailing. It sounded very much as if ten thousand cats had commenced to yowl on the back fence of the world, or a circus full of lions to snarl and spit and roar because breakfast was not ready. There was a great pattering of feet all about

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

them; unseen wings flapped and whirred above their heads.

"Dear, dear—what is the matter?" whimpered Lucile. "I wish my Daddy was here."

Something caught at her feet and pulled them from under her. As she fell she brought down the Foolish Idea, the Jester and Jupiter. Over and over they rolled in the darkness; then unseen hands pushed them over a bank and down they went—bumpety-bump, lickety-split, head-over-heels in the blackness, down, down a great, long hill which Lucile thought surely could have no ending. At last their speed slackened and, after rolling a bit on smooth, level ground, they came to a halt, panting, perspiring and altogether frightened.

"Is everybody here?" asked the Jester, stretching his rubber arms around them. "Whew—we must have rolled a mile in twenty seconds less than nothing!"

"And we have lost our way," lamented the Foolish Idea. "If a fellow ran across a brilliant idea now, it would be too dark to see it."



"Oh, do something—please, quick!"

THE DISMAL DARKS

“Hello,” exclaimed the Jester, “there’s the moon coming out!”

It was but two o’clock in the afternoon, yet what appeared to be a full, yellow moon was glimmering in the atmosphere just ahead.

“Look—there’s a man in the moon!” cried the Foolish Idea. “And he’s winking at Lucile.”

There was really a huge face in the moon and one big eye was blinking steadily at the little girl. Feeling somehow that it was expected of her, Lucile winked back at the bright moon-face. A great, thunderous, bass voice filled the air so suddenly that the Jester in his surprise bounded entirely over the moon-face.

“Who are all ye that come into the Domain of the Dismal Darks?” rumbled the great voice.

“Please, sir,” said Lucile, her voice trembling, “I am Lucile Lawrence, of Chicago, and I am searching for the Sapient Sage to find out what is what and things like that.”

“Oho,” laughed the moon-face, “then you tumbled about two miles out of your way when you bumped

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

down Roley-Poley Hill. I expect I'd better light up."

There was a swish in the air like the sound of a high wind. Then everything became light again. Before them stood a queer, tall, thin man with a head as round



and flat as a dollar and yellow as gold. His neck was made of an hour-glass, and his body was a huge clock-dial. On every side of the four travelers were the strangest little people who appeared to be made of silk

THE DISMAL DARKS

and tissue-paper. These delicate creatures floated easily in the air or dangled from the trees. They were shaped like all sorts of things—peanuts, telegraph-poles, mince-pies, bottles, pickles and pins. When the Jester, who had puffed himself into a ball in his roll down the hill, began to blow the air out of his inside, a dozen of the light, fragile creatures were blown into the air entirely out of sight.

“Hold on there!” cried the moon-face man. “You will blow all the Bogie-men out of the country.”

The Jester hurriedly asked pardon.

“Who are the Bogie-men?” asked Lucile.

“They are the people who inhabit the Domain of the Dismal Darks, and I am their Duke. They it was who touched you back there in the darkness and whose wings you heard flapping about you. But they would not hurt any one in the world. You see, there is nothing in the dark to be afraid of. It’s just that people imagine there is. Isn’t it that way in Chicago, too?”

“Ye-e-es,” hesitated Lucile. “I know now why it is that sometimes when I go into the kitchen after a drink

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

I hear things in the dark. I will never be afraid that way again."

"But you will want to continue your journey," said the Duke. "I will show you the way."

With the moon-face man at their head, they tramped for a long time past pretty houses and pleasant fields from which thin, silky Bogie-men, with the shapes of sausages and shovels and lemon-drops and knitting-needles, peered curiously out at them. It was late in the afternoon when the Jester, looking back, exclaimed:

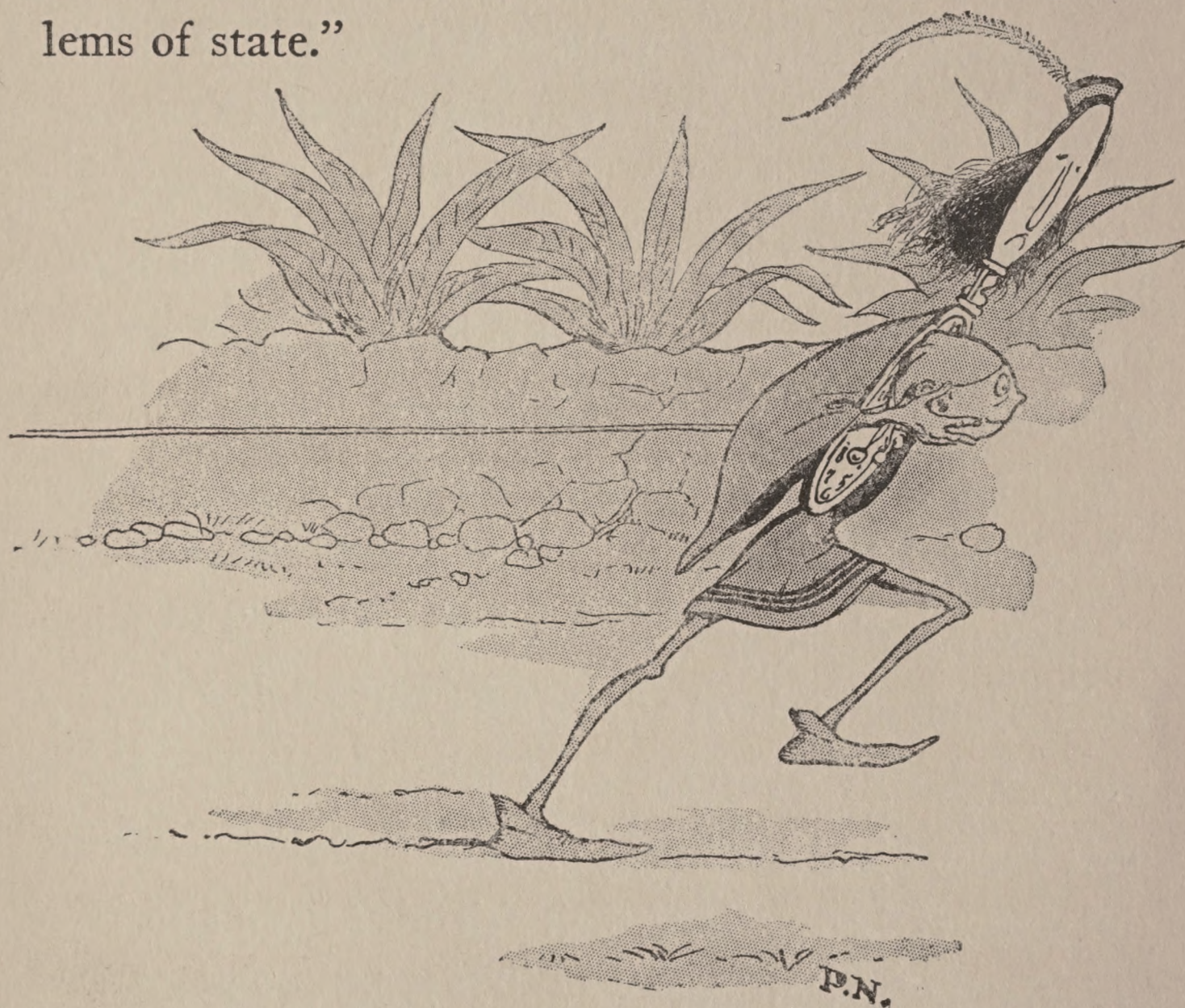
"Look, look—if there isn't King Danno coming up behind us!"

Turning their heads, the pilgrims made out in the dim distance the unhappy Monarch of Why galloping at the head of a squad of his soldiers. The party waved their weapons at Lucile and her companions.

"They must have made a bridge by putting together HIPPOPOTAMUS-LOGY and CATERPILLAR-ISM and PEP-PERMINT-ICITY and ALLIGATOR-ATION," said the Foolish Idea.

THE DISMAL DARKS

“Oh, save me from being Queen Sugar-and-Spice,” pleaded Lucile. “Really I’m too little to sit on a golden throne and command armies and work out problems of state.”



The Duke of the Dismal Darks put his hand to his yellow forehead and thought very hard. His head lighted up like an electric lamp; tiny particles of sand began to trickle through his hour-glass of a neck, and the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

clock-dial that formed his flat, round body ticked loudly. All of which showed just how deeply he was thinking.

"I know," he said suddenly. "Take hold of hands."

Then he proceeded to wrap the feet of the Jester firmly about a marshmallow tree. "You three keep hold of the Jester's neck. When I draw the sun-curtains and it becomes dark, just follow the neck, and it will lead you safely out of the Dismal Darks."

The Duke then stretched the rubber neck and body of the faithful Jester until, with the head in his hands, he disappeared beyond the brow of a hill. The King and his body-guard were quite near and coming rapidly when suddenly everything became absolutely black once more. Then with their hands sliding over the tightly-stretched neck of their friend, Lucile and Nic-Nac proceeded cautiously, Jupiter holding the skirt of his young mistress. For several minutes they groped this way, and then the dark lifted. Before them on a marble bridge, which spanned a crystal stream, stood the Duke holding firmly the sadly-stretched head of

THE DISMAL DARKS

the Jester. King Danno and his soldiers, lost in the darkness, were nowhere to be seen.

"Look out," said the Jester, very feebly, "I'm going to let go with my feet."

So tightly was his beautifully colored body stretched that upon releasing his feet from around the marshmallow tree his body shot high into the air and disappeared from sight over the crest of a hill in the country just ahead. There he reappeared in a series of terrific bounces and then sank completely from view.

"He's all right," the Duke assured them. "You will find him safe and sound when you catch up with him."

Then he wished them good luck and bade them good-bye. Lucile, the Foolish Idea and Jupiter crossed the marble bridge and, after climbing a long hill, found the Jester tired and weak from the stretching he had undergone, but happy and cheerful over the fact that he had been the means of saving them from the King of Why.

CHAPTER VII

THE GIGANTIC GERMS

The travelers were so fatigued from their adventure in the Domain of the Dismal Darks that they threw themselves down and slept in the peaceful valley into which the Jester had fallen after his long bounce. Next morning, having refreshed themselves with the plum pudding and tarts that grew on the trees at the wayside, they took their seats upon the moving pavement to renew their quest of the Sapient Sage.

They had not journeyed far before they became aware of a faint, distant screaming which sounded very much like the noise made by a lot of young pigs under a gate. As they proceeded, the sounds became plainer and plainer until the noise became almost deafening. Then it was that they discovered that the screams came

THE GIGANTIC GERMS

from a long row of iron pens in a big meadow to the right.

Leaving the pavement for a closer look, they found in the pens the oddest creatures Lucile had ever seen—far stranger even than she had beheld in the menageries of the circuses or in picture-books of African wild beasts or in the nightmares that sometimes caused her to scream out in her sleep. The monsters were about the size of a grizzly bear and were covered with soft fur of various, brilliant colors. Most of them had no heads, but were all bodies and legs or feelers—dozens of squirming, writhing limbs that kept moving and creeping about as if striving to get hold of something.

The Gigantic Germs, as the Jester described them, seemed to be under the charge of a number of little men, who wore blue goggles and carried heavy, black books from which they read steadily as they attended the creatures. But, while all the Germ-keepers were short and wore blue spectacles, the likeness ended there. For some of them were so fat as to be almost round; others were so slim that Lucile could see the outlines of

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

their bones through the skin. Some had skins blue as the sky; some were pink as roses; some yellow as the peeling of a banana. Others were lavender and purple and pea-green and orange and coal-black. While a number lay fast asleep on the grass, others hopped and skipped and jumped high into the air, never stopping to rest or get breath.

As Lucile gazed at the strange sight of a blue, fat, Germ-keeper leaping over the heads of a row of yellow, slim keepers, she heard a loud cry of alarm from the Foolish Idea just behind her. Turning, she saw that a big, green, star-shaped Germ had escaped from his keepers and was endeavoring to seize the badly-frightened Idea. Another Germ, which had feelers like a great crawfish and a fluked tail like a whale, was reaching for the Jester.

Immediately the frightened travelers ran for their lives along a pretty shell road that wound through the country of the Germs. The keepers took after the Gigantic Germs, but, being so short, they were unable to run fast. The Germs were very clumsy and Lucile

THE GIGANTIC GERMS

and her comrades had little difficulty in keeping away from them. Unfortunately, however, the road, turning suddenly, dipped into a hollow enclosed by steep cliffs which nothing but a spider could ever have climbed. Thus they had to stand at bay and await tremblingly the fate in store for them.

"I tell you," said the Jester, turning suddenly upon the shuddering Nic-Nac, "if you will pop into their heads with one of your foolish ideas, it might start them on some other business and we could get away."

"Thank you, but I am trying to become a wise Idea and give up all those foolish notions which have made me so much laughed at," answered the Foolish Idea, with dignity.

"Tut, tut!" scolded the Jester. "A foolish idea in their heads just now would be a very wise idea indeed. Hurry, here they come!"

"But they haven't any heads," Nic-Nac further objected. "And they can't have ideas in their legs or bodies."

"Oh, do something—please, quick!" broke in Lucile,

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

as the Gigantic Germs appeared at the mouth of the hollow.

"You make them laugh," suggested the Foolish Idea to the Jester.

"What a foolish idea!" retorted the Jester.

"Oh, no, it isn't," persisted Nic-Nac. "You're a jester and it's your business to make things laugh. If they laugh, they won't be angry and will go away."

"But how can they laugh when they haven't any heads?" argued the Jester.

"They have mouths on their feelers," insisted Nic-Nac. "A mouth can laugh—and it can bite, too."

At that the Jester, advancing toward the Gigantic Germs, began to twist his brilliantly-colored rubber body into knots, to flatten himself out, to roll into a ball, and to do other ludicrous capers in the effort to make the odd creatures laugh. His contortions were so funny that Lucile and the Foolish Idea laughed until the tears ran down their cheeks, but the Germs only gaped with their wide, fishy mouths. Finally the Jester turned his face inside out and shook it at the

THE GIGANTIC GERMS

grumpy-looking monsters. The star-shaped Germ thrust forward a long feeler and bit the Jester on the left heel. Instantly the Jester turned green from head to foot—green as grass or pea-pods.



As they stood horrified at the sudden transformation of their friend, the Germ-keepers ran up. At their head was a somewhat taller keeper, who frowned

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

deeply, like Lucile's father, and carried a very heavy, black book, on the cover of which Lucile read the words, "On Certain Man-eating Tendencies of the Tiddledy-winkus, the Sizzle-mo-diddles and other Germs."

"Dear me," exclaimed the tall Germ-keeper, "whom have we here—what's the matter, and where are you going?"

Lucile told the story of their flight from King Danno and their quest of the Sapient Sage, and then explained how the Jester, being bitten by the star-shaped Germ, had suddenly lost his beautiful red, orange, blue, purple and pink stripes.

"I don't see that there is any harm done," said the leader of the Germ-keepers. "Green is a pretty color."

"Now he can pass himself off for a frog or a cucumber or a watermelon," said one of the keepers.

"Or a horse-pasture," suggested another.

"Or a flag of Ireland or anything green," said another.

"But I don't want to look like any of those things," objected the Jester. "I want my beautiful stripes.

THE GIGANTIC GERMS

Some day they may help me make people laugh, which is the dearest aim of my life."

"Oh, that's it," remarked the leader, frowning so deeply that his blue goggles sank into a great crease in his forehead. "Then I must look in the book and see."

He turned the leaves of the big book to a page headed "Neeners and bamboes—bites of," and read a while; then he called to several of the keepers to bring certain of the Gigantic Germs.

"You will have to be bitten by the Purplicus, the Crimsonicus, the Yellowissimus, the Pollywog-Pinkus and other Germs," he said to the Jester. "It is the only way to get back your stripes, and it will not hurt you, as you are a rubber man."

A hundred-legged purple Germ, attended by a purple-skinned keeper, was led up and bit the Jester upon the thumb, whereupon a gorgeous, purple stripe appeared upon his body. Then other Germs, yellow, pink, blue, crimson and brown, came up one after the other and snapped at the Jester until he was far more brilliant than he had been before.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Many, many thanks!" cried the rubber man, clapping his hands. "Now I have prettier stripes than a barber's pole or a stick of peppermint candy."

The tall Germ-keeper next proposed to conduct them on a round of inspection among the Gigantic Germs.



THE GIGANTIC GERMS

"The germs you have in your country," he explained, "are so small that about forty million live in a drop of water and you have to look through the microscope to see them. Most of them live inside of people, too. Here the germs are all gigantic and of many kinds. We have lazy germs and industrious germs and pink germs and purple germs and angry germs and happy germs and all kinds of germs. They have all bitten their keepers, and by looking at the keeper, you can tell just what kind of a germ he attends."

"Here is a new kind. What is this?" asked Lucile, pointing toward a keeper, who sat upon a fence laughing so heartily that she could not see how he managed to keep from falling.

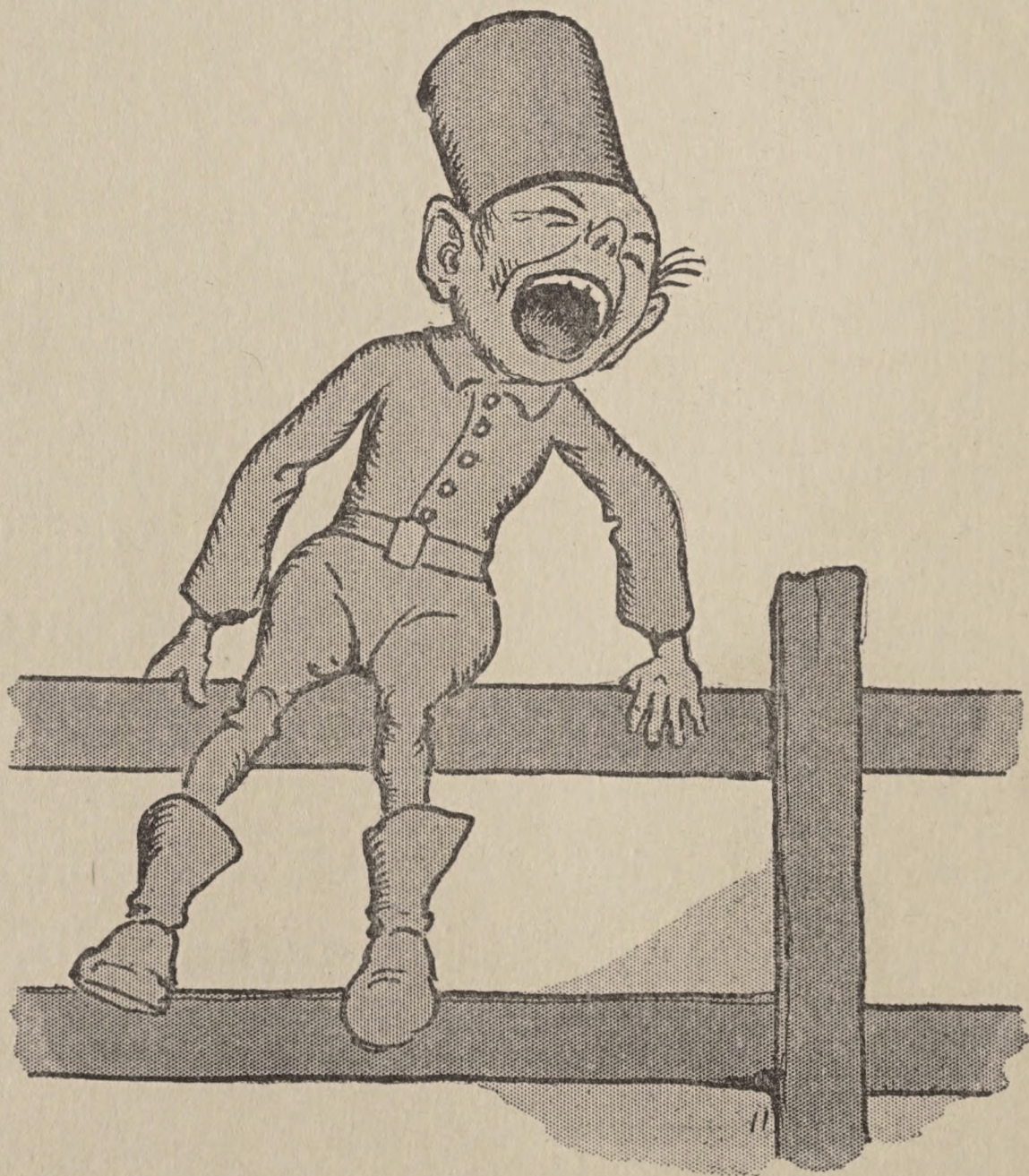
"He has been bitten by the Bugissimus Laughissimus," explained their conductor. "Any one bitten by that Germ must laugh the rest of his life and finally die laughing."

"If I were a Bugissimus Laughissimus I would have no trouble making laughs," said the Jester, sadly.

"Now this keeper," said the tall man, pointing to-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

ward a fat, little keeper, who sat wailing in a fence corner, "has been bitten by the Bacillus Cry-baby-ensis. This sleepy fellow has been bitten by the Snoozlewogg, and the one over here was bitten by the Do-re-mi-fa-so-la-si Bug and has been singing 'Johnny-get-your-hair-cut' for the last forty-nine years. But you will be wanting to continue your journey before King Danno overtakes you—"



THE GIGANTIC GERMS

"It's too late now," spoke up the Foolish Idea, pointing down the road toward a party of mounted men who were galloping rapidly.

"Ooh—what shall we do?" cried Lucile, wringing her hands.

"I—I—I don't know," stammered the tall Germ-keeper. "I'll just look in the book and see." He began to turn the leaves of the big, black volume. "Here it tells how to tell the stars from the star-fishes, and here it tells how to make knitting-needle-soup, but I don't see a thing about escaping from unhappy kings."

"I tell you," cried Nic-Nac, "let the Brownissimus Bugissimus bit us, and we'll stand very still so that he will think we are Indian cigar-signs."

"Hum-hum, not a bad idea," said the guide, "but I have a better one now."

He gave some hurried orders to a slow and indolent keeper, who shuffled down the road with a weary-looking Germ. As the King's horsemen approached, the big, lazy Germ suddenly began biting right and left, King, man and beast. King Danno and his soldiers,

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

tumbling from their horses, sank into the soft grass by the roadside. Their horses also sprawled out. Lucile and her companions, fearing that some harm had come to King Danno, were greatly distressed. But the tall Germ-keeper explained that the King's party had merely been bitten by the Lazy-Lolly-Wogg and would be sleepy and indolent until Lucile had escaped from the Germ-Country at which time he would have the Ginger-Wiggles restore the royal party.

“And now, if you will sit upon the backs of the Ginger-Wiggles, I will have them take you to the movable highway.”

The travelers then climbed upon the fuzzy backs of the great Ginger-Wiggles, who carried them in a short while to the familiar, couch-lined pavement, which rapidly whisked them away from the haunts of the Gigantic Germs.



Suddenly there was a great splash

CHAPTER VIII

THE RHYTHMICAL REALM OF RHYMO

Early next morning the pilgrims awoke to find themselves in a beautiful, green country abloom with wonderful flowers and alive with singing birds. As soon as Lucile had her eyes well open, she exclaimed:

“What pretty country is this? It is the most beautiful I have seen in the Kingdom of Why.”

“It is the Rhythmical Realm of Rhymo,” the Jester informed her, “and it is, indeed, the most lovely of all the lands of Why. It is here that all the rhymes and all the poetry are made, and such a land must, of course, be bright and beautiful.”

“What is a rhyme?” asked the Foolish Idea, who really knew very little about things outside his own cabbage-head.

“It’s where lines of words end with the same sound,” explained the Jester, “like—

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Mister Tupper
Come to supper.”

“Or

“Little Boy Blue
Has lost his shoe,”

said Lucile.

“What a beautiful idea and how very different from my own foolish notions,” said Nic-Nac. “The first rhyme I see I shall put it in my cedar chest next to my shiny, brass heart.”

After getting well into the heart of the Rhythmical Realm they left the pavement in order to observe the style of the houses and the character of the inhabitants. Directly in front of them was a village of exquisitely colored block-houses, all circular in shape with tops that ran to a sharp point. Above the doors of the houses were signs bearing in golden, perfectly-shaped letters the queerest jingling inscriptions, as

Amos Head, Dealer in Bread.

Or

William Wooz, Mender of Shoes.

THE REALM OF RHYMO

Or

Gem Peanut Store;
Closes at four.

Rambling about among the houses were pale, dreamy-eyed, little men, with hair so long that it dragged on the grass behind them. Each little man



carried under the right arm a big book and under the other a peculiar, musical instrument something like a

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

guitar. As they walked to and fro among the fragrant flowers, they moved their lips constantly as if repeating something to themselves. When they stopped to speak to one another, they accompanied their words with the sweetest, tinkle-tinkle music from the guitar-like instruments. Lucile noticed that they spoke, even of the most every-day things, only in jingles. One of the Rhymoes stopped to address another:

“Whither away
This pretty day?”

The second Rhymo answered, playing his instrument as he spoke:

“I am bound to the Zoo
To hear the lions coo.”

Just then one of the Rhymoes flopped down on the grass, crying out, “I’m all a-tingle with a new jingle!”

All the Rhymoes came running.

“Scissors and pigs
And elephant wigs,”

the Rhymo cried triumphantly; and the others, nodding approvingly, wrote the new jingle in their books.

THE REALM OF RHYMO

Presently another Rhymo cried out that he had a rhyme, which turned out to be

“Chocolates and cheese
And butterflies’ knees.”

And then another sang out:

“It’s pickles and pups
When the zebra sups.”

After watching this rhyme-making for some time, the Jester exclaimed,

“What a funny thing,
That every one should sing!”

“You made a rhyme
That very time,”

said Lucile, surprised to find herself talking so queerly.

“We have all turned poet,
But don’t seem to know it,”

said the Foolish Idea.

And even Jupiter began to patter all the words that rhymed with his beloved red, such as “Ed,” “bed,” “bread,” “head,” “Ted,” “Ned,” “said” and “wed.” For some reason they were speaking in rhymes just as the people of Rhymo did all the time.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

While Jupiter stood pattering his red-rhymes, a gorgeously robed Rhymo, with black hair so long it trailed upon the grass for yards and yards behind him, approached the party, and, playing sweetly on his stringed instrument, addressed them,

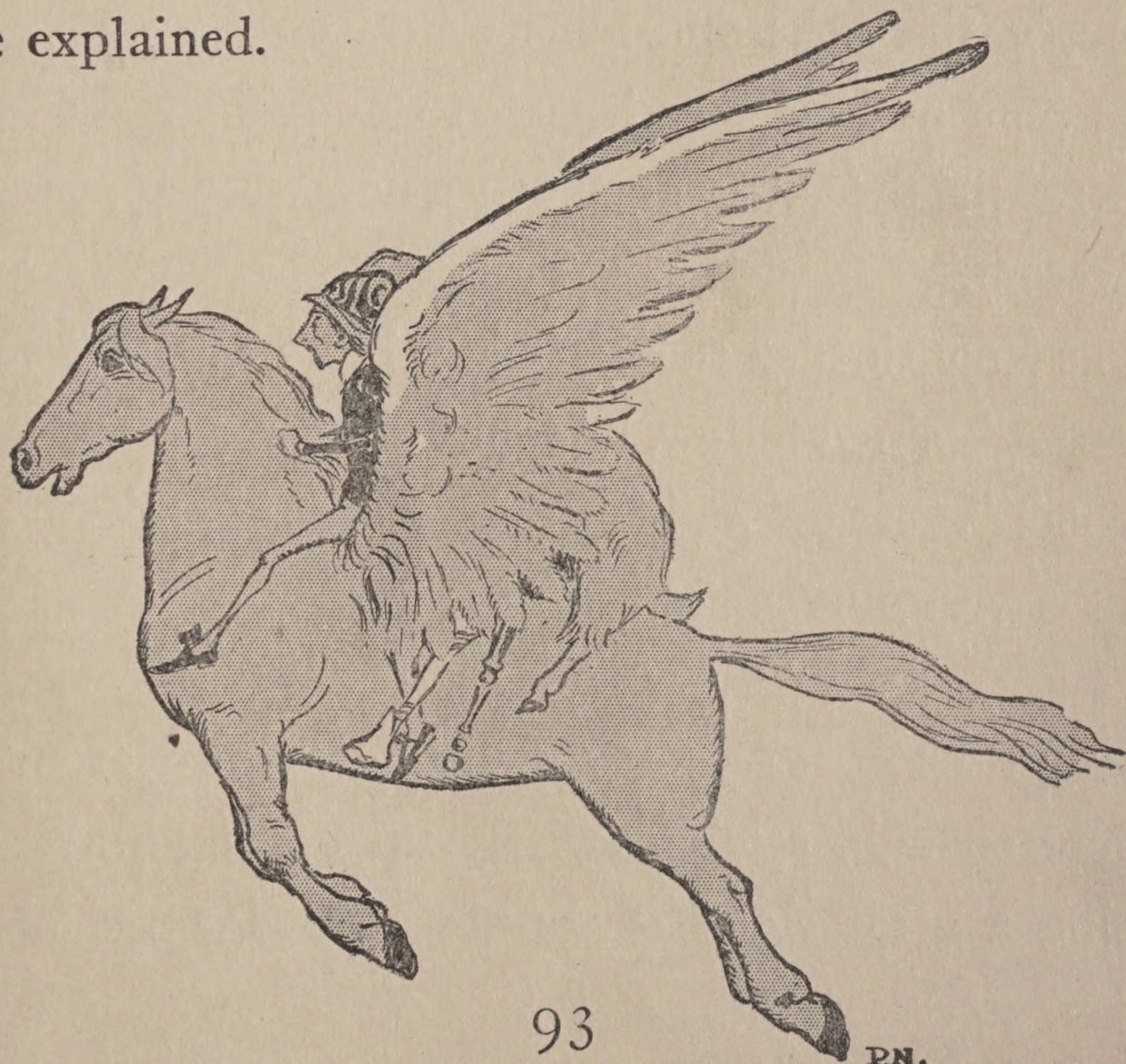
“Oh, pray tell me your names,
Your purposes and aims.”

Lucile, speaking in rhymes without the slightest effort, explained their mission. The long-haired man then informed them that he was the Poet Laureate, of Rhymo, and that he would gladly assist them upon their journey. He said, however, that the only road they could take out of the Realm of Rhymo was blocked by the Great Gate of Rhymes, which no one—not even the King of Why—could pass without first uttering a word to rhyme with the word posted upon the great gate and which was changed for each traveler. He would gladly lend them Pegasus, the winged horse of the Rhymoes, with whose assistance they could reach the gate before night fell.



THE REALM OF RHYMO

Lucile and her companions were only too glad to mount the great, white horse with wings and a back broad enough to hold them all, including Jupiter and the Poet Laureate. Soon they were flying rapidly over the beautiful Realm of Rhymo. Here and there were great, brick factories, with strains of music pouring out of their chimneys, instead of thick, black, ugly smoke. These were rhyme-factories where all the jingles were made into poetry-books, the Poet Laureate explained.



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

After flying over miles and miles of the pretty, circular houses of the Rhymoes, they came at last to a great, golden gate completely blocking the movable road, and so high that not even Pegasus could have flown over the top. They dismounted and Lucile approached the gate. Immediately upon a big slab set in the gate there appeared the word "NOODLES."

"Poodles," said Lucile, and there opened in the great, golden gate a hole just the size and shape of Lucile, through which she and none other could pass.

As soon as Lucile had passed through, the Foolish Idea neared the gate. Instantly a new word appeared: "BLOSSOM."

The Foolish Idea thought hard, but, as he was such a scatter-brained fellow, he could think of nothing better than "sausage" and "ostrich" and "tassel."

"You had better hurry,
Of there will be a great flurry,"

sang out the Poet Laureate, pointing down the road.

Sure enough, coming swiftly up the highway and raising a great cloud of dust, was a gigantic, black

THE REALM OF RHYMO

steed, bearing upon its back a party of soldiers. This, the Poet Laureate declared, was Erebella, the swift nightmare of the Dismal Darks, which the King had managed somehow to obtain. The closeness of the danger so frightened the Foolish Idea that he cried out "O'possum!" whereupon the golden gate opened to just his size, and he passed through.

Jupiter, who came next, was confronted with the word "OVERHEAD."

"Turkey-red," he bleated, and passed through the newly-opened hole of goat-size.

But the Jester was to have no such easy time. As he stepped up to the gate, there appeared the word "ANT-EATER."

"Aunt Edith," said the Jester, but no hole appeared.

"Be quick with your rhyme,
For there is slight time,"

called the Poet Laureate.

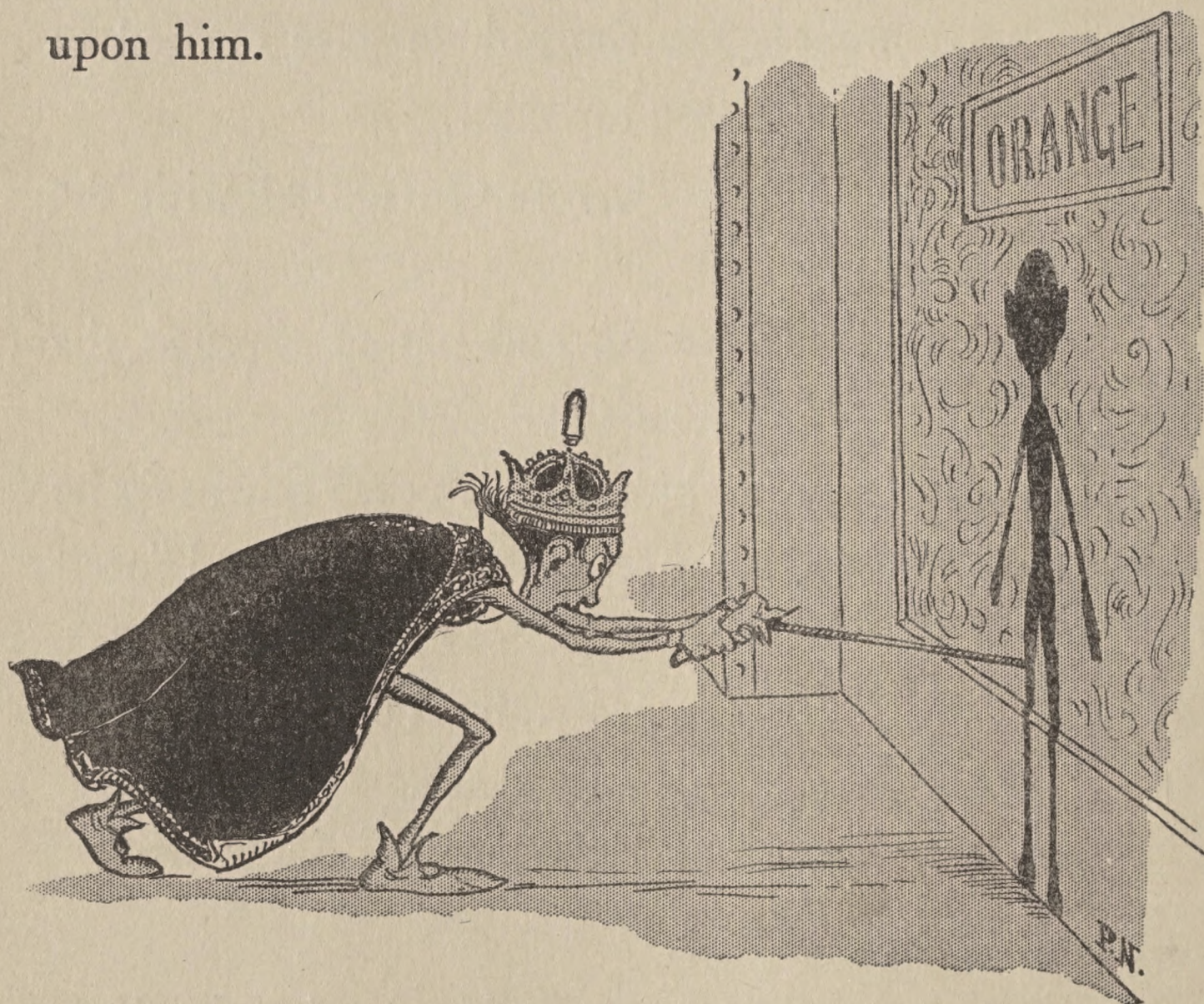
The Jester scratched a few flecks of red and yellow paint off his head, in his effort to conjure up the necessary rhyme.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Antelope-feeder," he tried again, but there still appeared no hole of Jester-size.

"Make haste, oh, make haste
There's no time to waste,"

cried the Poet Laureate, for King Danno was almost upon him.



"Band-leader," said the Jester; and the golden wall opened.

But the opening was so close a fit that the Jester had to squeeze through very slowly. Before he could get

THE REALM OF RHYMO

entirely through, King Danno had seized him by the foot. The Foolish Idea and Lucile, who were waiting on the other side, grabbed him by the head and began to pull. As they proceeded along the road with his head, the Jester stretched flat and thin as a sheet of bright bunting. Suddenly the King released the foot at the gate, throwing Lucile, the Foolish Idea and the Jester into a heap in the road. Then they heard a great muttering of angry words from the other side of the gate—"porridge," "hogshead," "olive" and "orang-outang."

"Oho! The King is trying to make a rhyme for 'orange,'" cried the Jester. "I saw that word go up on the gate as I squeezed through."

"Then he will be a long time getting through," said Lucile, "for I have heard there is no rhyme for 'orange' in the language. And as I am very tired and sleepy, I propose to lie down."

Following Lucile's suggestion, the travelers threw themselves upon the grass and slept. And the last sound that fell upon their ears was the voice of the King—"outrage," "florid," "Norwich," "onslaught;" "pottage," "cottage."

CHAPTER IX

OVER THE RAINBOW

Lucile was awakened next morning by the shrill voice of the Foolish Idea.

“What a pretty landscape! Everything in sight has a colored border.”

Lucile, rubbing her sleepy eyes, was amazed to see that the trees, rocks, fences, houses and everything else were tinted about the edges with the seven colors, violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red, just as when one looks at objects through one of those queerly-shaped glasses called prisms.

“This is Rainbow Land,” explained the Jester. “It is where all the colors in the Kingdom of Why are made. I think I shall get me a brand-new suit. It will help me make some one laugh at my poor jokes.”

“And I think I shall have this pink dress colored

OVER THE RAINBOW

orange or green or blue," said Lucile, with a sigh. "It is getting disgracefully dirty."

"And I hope to find a lot of red in such a country," sighed Jupiter. "I am tired of all the green and white and black things I have been trying to eat."

Much refreshed by their long slumber, they left the movable pavement and walked rapidly along the pretty, flower-lined road. Before they had gone very far, a man stepped suddenly from one of the color-bordered houses. He was a very queer, little man,



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

being banded with seven broad and brilliant stripes, encircling his body. Thus his hat was of violet; his head, a brilliant indigo; his neck, blue; his chest, a pretty shade of green; his waist, yellow; his legs, orange, and his feet, red.

“Good morning, travelers,” said the seven-colored man, bowing clear to the ground and lifting his violet hat. “I am the Royal Rainbow-ologist. I bid you welcome to Rainbow Land. May I ask who you are, from whence you come, and whither you are bound?”

When the Jester had informed him of their purposes, the Rainbow-ologist shook his head. “We are now at work mixing the paints to re-color the rainbow and put it in good shape for the autumn rains. But, as you doubtless know, it does not become visible until the rains come out of Cloud Land, and no one knows when that will be. Hence you may be delayed in using the rainbow to cross the Gulf of Nobody-Knows-How-Deep. It is the only way to get across.”

“We can’t wait too long,” sighed Lucile, looking behind her, “or the King of Why will overtake us and



OVER THE RAINBOW

force me to be Queen Sugar-and-Spice the Fourteenth."

"Well, it can't be helped," said the Royal Rainbow-ologist, shrugging his green shoulders. "Meanwhile, I dare say you would like to see the Rainbow-Artists mix the colors."

"Indeed, we should," cried the travelers. And Jupiter added, "Red first."

The seven-striped man led them down a long hill to a great pool of what appeared to be greenish water. All around the pool were scores of little men, much like the Royal Rainbow-ologist, except that they were green from the tips of their hats to the soles of their shoes. All of them were busily engaged throwing into the pool handful of grass, leaves, frogs, cucumbers, pickles, peas, everything and anything green that they could lay their hands on.

"Why do they throw all those pickles and frogs into the pool?" questioned Lucile.

"It is to make the paint for the green portion of the rainbow," explained the Rainbow-ologist. "See what a fine color it is becoming." And, indeed, the great

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

pool was changing into a deeper, richer green every minute.

The seven-striped man next conducted them to the great red pool, where the Rainbow-Artists were throwing in great quantities of roses and brickbats and rooster-combs and geraniums and radishes.

"Yum-yum!" cried Jupiter, and began to lap greedily at the bright crimson mixture. Suddenly there was a great splash, followed by a frantic "Baa-a-a-a!" The greedy goat had leaned too far over the edge of the pool and was now coming to the surface to flounder wildly about. The Jester and the Idea, running to his assistance, soon had him out upon the bank. But, wonder of wonders! Where before he had been a pure and snowy white, poor Jupiter was now as red from head to foot as any flamingo that ever stalked across a swamp. The Royal Rainbow-ologist shook his head.

"You will always be as red as you are now," he declared. "The colors of the rainbow won't come off."

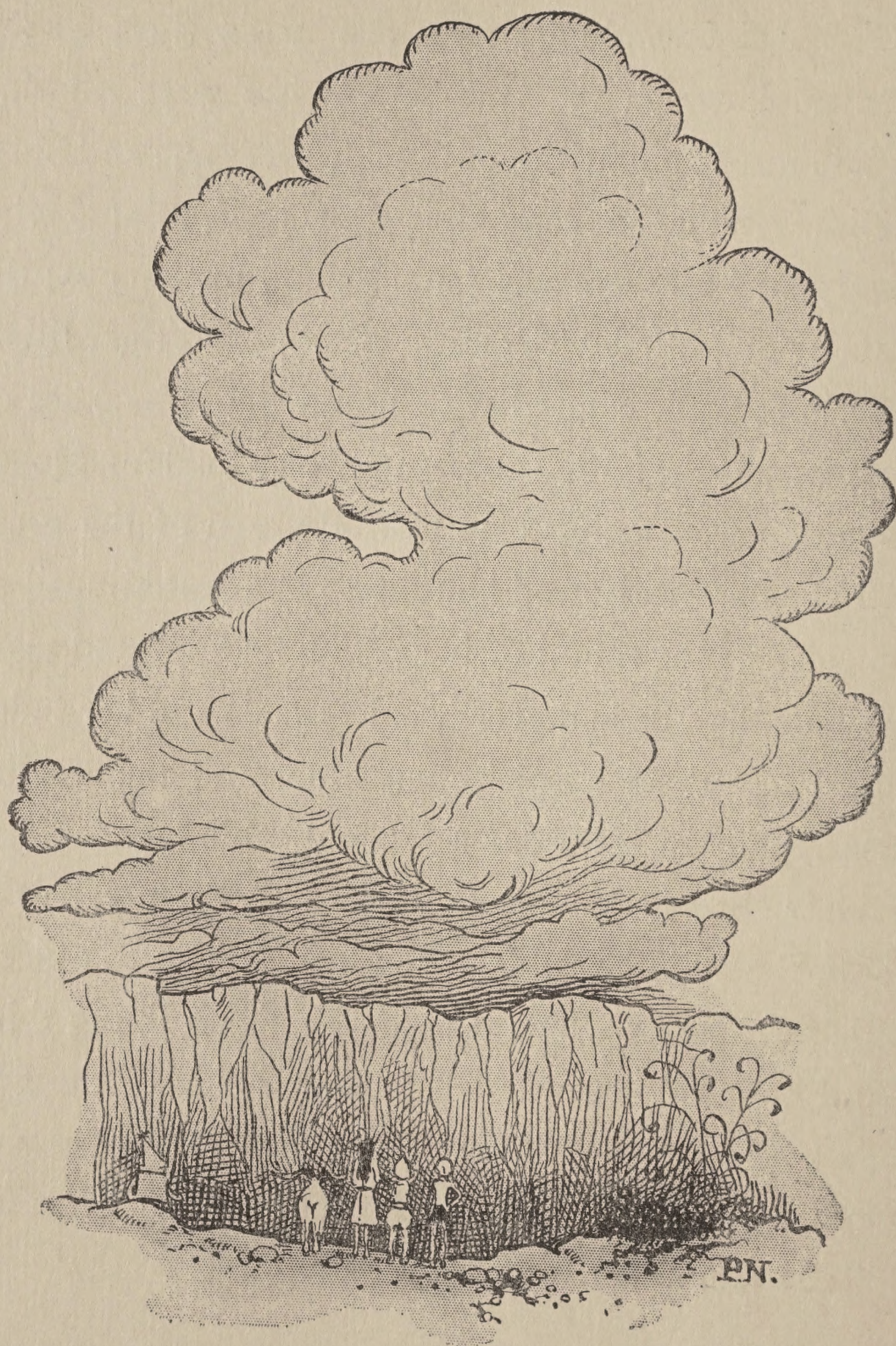
"Then I am glad I fell into the pool," laughed Jupiter, "for I would rather be red than king."

OVER THE RAINBOW

The Rainbow-ologist next conducted them to the blue pool, which the Rainbow-Artists were coloring with immense quantities of bluebird-feathers and blueberries. After that came the yellow pool, colored with canary-bird feathers and jonquils and buttercups; the orange pool, filled with orange-peeling and tiger-lilies; the violet pool, colored with innumerable bunches of violets; and the indigo pool, into which loads and loads of indigo were being emptied. At each of the great vats the Jester allowed himself to be painted until at the close of the round of inspection he appeared more brilliant than he had ever been. Lucile had her faded pink dress dyed a spick-span blue, and the Foolish Idea repainted his cedar chest and table legs.

After they had made the round of the great color pools, the Rainbow-ologist conducted them to a deep, wide gulf across which it seemed that no living thing could hope to pass. Upon the other side of the gulf they could see nothing but clouds, great piles and stacks of white and gray clouds that looked to be mountains of foam.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY



OVER THE RAINBOW

"You can do nothing now except to sit here and wait until the clouds come over from Cloud Land and cause it to rain," explained the Royal Rainbow-ologist. "After it rains, the rainbow will be visible and you can cross upon it. Of course, no one knows just when it will rain. We have been waiting for weeks to paint it when it appears."

"But we can't wait too long," complained Lucile. "The King always manages to get past the things that stop him for a while, and he will catch up with us."

It did not rain that day nor the next nor the next. Across the great gulf there were black clouds, light, fleecy clouds, and gorgeous pink-and-gold clouds, but on the Rainbow-Land side the sun shone and shone until Lucile thought it would never, never rain. The Foolish Idea tried to borrow an umbrella and throw it into the gulf, saying that he had always heard that if one lost his umbrella it was sure to rain.

"That is only a joke," said the Jester, "but not one of mine—alas—for it has made people laugh."

"It is another of my foolish ideas," lamented Nic-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Nac. "It looks as if I would never have serious thoughts about serious matters such as dynamite and ducks and diplomacy and doughnuts."

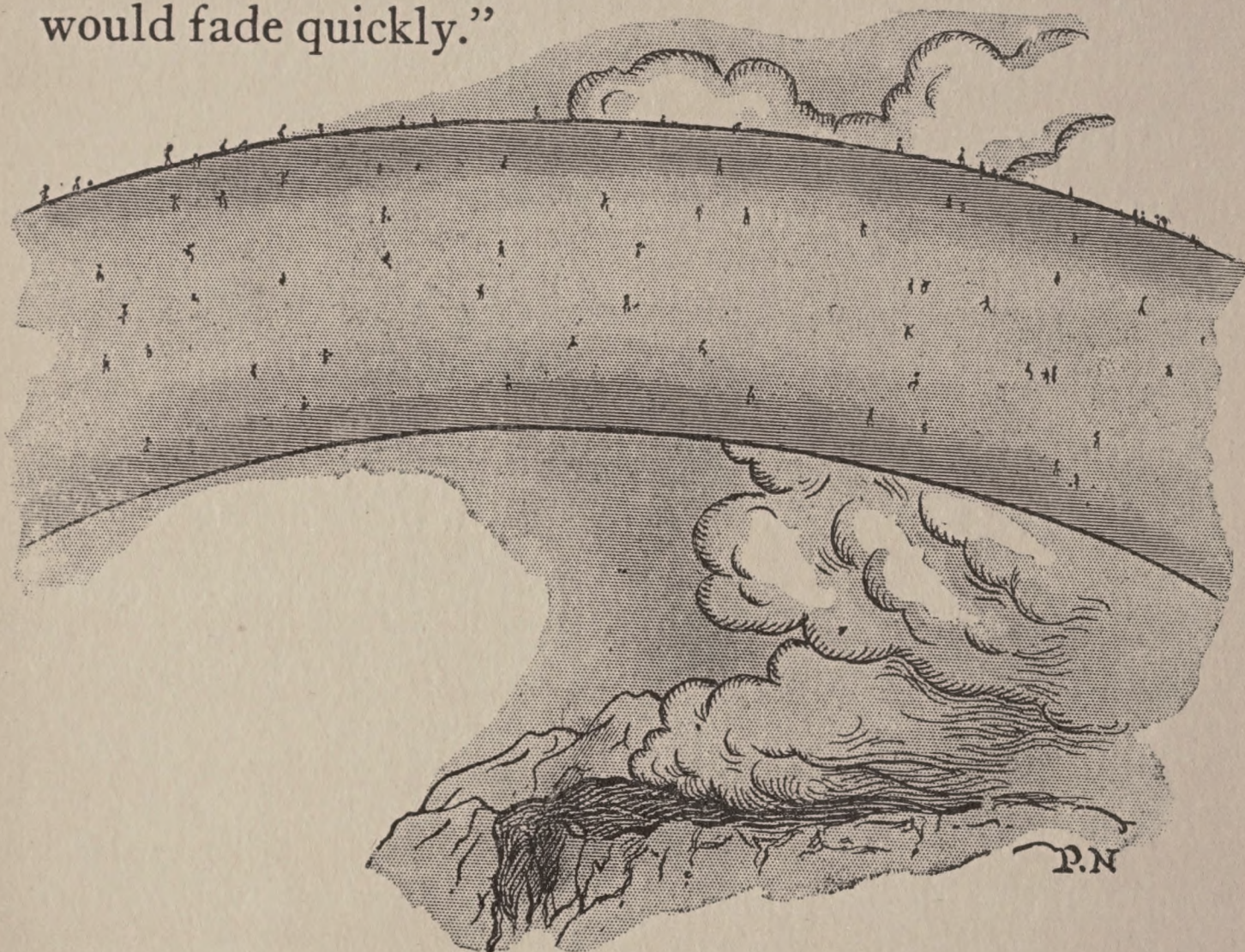
Finally, however, the big, black clouds rolled over the gulf from Cloud Land, and it rained and rained so that Lucile and her companions had to take refuge in one of the color-bordered houses until they feared another flood had come. Then the rain ceased and, just as the Rainbow-ologist had said, there was the rainbow, spanning the great, deep, dark gulf of Nobody-Knows-How-Deep and forming a wonderfully beautiful bridge across the chasm. But this rainbow was not like the dim, far-away rainbows you have seen in the skies after it has quit raining and you can go out and play frog-in-the-meadow-can't-get-him-out once more. It was as high as a church steeple and as wide as a great bridge. Each of the colors formed a deck high enough for a giraffe to walk in without knocking off the spider webs with his head.

Instantly the Rainbow-Artists climbed all over the mammoth arch and began to paint. Lucile, acting on

OVER THE RAINBOW

the Rainbow-ologist's advice, entered the lower, red deck.

"Good-by," said the Rainbow-ologist. "You had best hurry, as, if the sun should come out, the rainbow would fade quickly."



The travelers passed rapidly along the red deck, then, ascending a flight of steps, they passed into the orange deck, and then through the yellow and green and blue and indigo decks to the violet section, which was very, very high in the air. After this, they began

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

the downward journey. When they had almost reached the other side, there was a great clatter and the rainbow shook violently.

“It is the King!” cried the Jester. “At last he will catch us, and Lucile must be Queen of Why, and I shall never, never make any one laugh.”

“Nor I get any good, common sense into this cabbage-head of mine,” lamented Nic-Nac.

The clatter of their pursuers became louder, while the rainbow swayed and swung with the unaccustomed load. The pilgrims put forth all their strength, but being exhausted from the long climb up the seven color-decks, they could not go much faster. A great shouting behind them attracted their attention and, looking back, they saw that King Danno and his soldiers had gained the highest point of the rainbow and were ready for the downward dash.

“We shall never get away from him now,” moaned the Jester.

“But look!” exclaimed the Foolish Idea. “The sun is coming out.”



Four tigers stood upon one another's heads and sang a song

OVER THE RAINBOW

“And the rainbow is fading,” cried Lucile.

Sure enough the brilliant tints of the great arch were fast becoming pale and dim.

“We must hurry or we shall fall into the gulf,” said the Jester.

They put forth what strength they had left and, although they were soon feeling their way down a sharp slant which they could no longer see, it was but a few minutes until they stepped upon solid ground.

“I wonder what became of the King?” said Lucile.

“He will just have to stand still up there until it rains again,” said the Jester. “He will never dare move from that height while he can not see the rainbow.”

“Oho!” cried Nic-Nac, suddenly. “Look back and you will see him.”

Lucile turned her head to behold far, far above them a group of men, who seemed no bigger than birds and who appeared to be floating in thin, blue air. And in her heart of hearts the little girl could not help but feel sorry for the unhappy Monarch imprisoned so many hundred feet above the ground on a great rainbow which he could not see.

CHAPTER X

CLOUD LAND

The country in which the travelers now found themselves was gray and damp, without a blade of grass or a green tree or a rose bush to be seen anywhere. In the distance along the movable highway which ran on from the end of the great rainbow bridge, they could see cloud upon cloud piled high as the sky. Not a house was in sight.

"We shall never, never find our way through that great bunch of clouds," complained Lucile. "What shall we do? Has any one an idea?"

"I have none but foolish ones," said Nic-Nac, sadly.

"Let us go ahead," suggested the Jester, "and when we get to the clouds perhaps there will appear an opening among them. The road must go on somewhere."

They stepped upon the moving pavement and within

CLOUD LAND

a few minutes, just as the Jester had said, the pavement passed into a great, high tunnel formed by a goldy-pink cloud and a fluffy, white cloud piling against each other. Within this strange cloud-tunnel the light was the softest, prettiest mixture of pink and yellow.

On and on they sped through the cloud-tunnel, every hundred feet disclosing some new and beautiful color in the roof above their heads. Once, when all had their heads upturned, marveling at an exquisite combination of violet and orange, the highway passed beneath a low-hanging cloud, which raked their heads and filled their open mouths with water.

"Br-r-r-r!" choked the Jester, pressing his rubber sides together and spouting a column of water from his mouth. "That was a rain-cloud we ran into."

When they had proceeded for some minutes through the wonderful cloud-tunnel, the movable platform stopped abruptly. A great, bass voice from the greenish cloud-wall at their side sounded so suddenly that they started:

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Now, what do you want? Come to kick about the weather, I suppose."

After they had looked about them very closely, they discovered that the voice proceeded from an old, gray-bearded man of some thin, smoke-like substance, so delicate that one could see right through him. There was a tremendous scowl upon the old man's face as he continued:

"If you've come to ask for a hot spell in January or snow-storms in July, you'd just as well go back. Why can't people be satisfied with the weather?" The old man twisted his face into a hideous leer and began to dance about in such a wild fit of rage that Lucile and her companions drew back in fright.

"Please, sir," the Jester said, very timidly, "we haven't come to kick about the weather if that is what you think. We are merely journeying to find the Sapi-ent Sage to find out what is what and why."

"Oh!" grunted the old man, much relieved. "Then your road is straight ahead of you, though you must transfer at the Bureau of Winds and Weather. And

CLOUD LAND

as you do not know where that is, I suppose I must accompany you."

He stepped upon the platform, which immediately began to move forward. "You see, I am the Wizard of the Weather," he explained, "and the only people who



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

come to Cloud Land come to kick about my work. It doesn't make their teacake-trees grow, or they want to go on a Sunday-school picnic the day it rains, or they don't have the good, old winters their granddaddies had." The old man shook his thin, transparent head and sighed again.

"It must be very aggravating," sympathized the Jester.

After another wonderful ride through the cloud-tunnel, which changed constantly from green to gray and red and purple and yellow and pink, the platform stopped before an opening in the wall of clouds. Looking up, Lucile was gladdened to see the blue sky once more. Fastened on the side of a huge, white cloud was a great sign-board, which read:

Bureau of Winds and Weather,
Sir Jackson Frost, Prophet.

Fastened to another cloud was a bulletin-board with these inscriptions:

Dry as All-Get-Out in Idea Land.

Heavy rains in Southern Why. This insures a fine crop of orange marmalade.

Trade is fine among the trade winds.

CLOUD LAND

As they read these queer bulletins, a wise-looking, little man, as thin and smoky as the Wizard, hopped out of a cloud and tacked up another bulletin:

It may rain or it may not rain to-morrow in Word Land.



"Of course," cried Lucile, "it's simply bound to do one or the other. Anybody could make a prediction as good as that."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

The little man winked slyly. "But they couldn't make a better one," he said. "You see, a prediction like that simply can't fail to come true one way or the other. That is the kind we always post, and that is why we never make mistakes."

Another little man came out of the clouds and posted a bulletin, which read:

Long dry spell in Germ Land. Reported that the peppermint-candy crop will lose its red stripes.

"Here," called the Wizard of the Weather to an assistant, "you'd better take one of those big, black clouds and sail over to Germ Land. Give 'em about two hours' rain. Sprinkle all the peppermint trees and gingerbread bushes and mince-pie vines. No flooding now."

The little assistant, saluting like a soldier, jumped into the heart of the great, black cloud, which immediately began to sail upward until it disappeared in the direction of the land of the Gigantic Germs.

"If you will come with me now," said the Wizard, "I will show you how the clouds are made."

CLOUD LAND

They followed eagerly through a rift in the clouds until they came to an open space, in the center of which was an immense lake of water. On the shore of this lake were hundreds of fires which were being kept up



by the little, thin Cloud-People. The heat from the fires caused streams of vapor to ascend constantly from the surface of the water, and these streams united in the air to form rain-clouds. As each cloud floated up, a Cloud-Man jumped inside to take charge of it.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"When we want snow clouds, we float them up high and let them freeze," explained the Wizard.

"But doesn't that freeze the Cloud-Man inside?" inquired the Foolish Idea.

"Oh, no," replied the Wizard; "you see, we Cloud-People are so thin we never feel rain or cold or heat or snow. The only things we mind are kicks—kicking about the weather when we do the best we can. But what in all Cloud Land is this?"

Lucile and the others, looking back, beheld King Danno and a score of his soldiers galloping down upon them through the rift in the clouds. They looked hurriedly about for some way of escape, but in every direction there were clouds, clouds, clouds.

"Here goes!" cried Jupiter, and, selecting a pretty, reddish cloud, he bounded plump into the heart of it. Without stopping to think, Lucile, the Idea and the Jester jumped after him. As soon as they were inside the fluffy, red cloud, their ears were filled with the most terrific roaring and rumbling. Quick, blinding flashes of light appeared before their eyes, and it seemed as

CLOUD LAND

though some one was pouring water over their heads and shoulders. In a few seconds they were drenched thoroughly. Lucile, badly frightened, called to the Jester, but the uproar was so great she could not hear her own voice, nor could she see her faithful, rubber friend because of the blinding flashes. The water, too, was beginning to rise about her on every side so that she feared she would drown.

“Oh, if I were only home in Chicago sitting dry and warm and watching Daddy read from his big, black book!” she murmured.

Then her right hand got hold of something soft and hairy, which she knew to be Jupiter, and her left hand grasped something smooth and yielding, which she knew to be the Jester, and she felt herself lifted from her feet and carried on the surface of a rushing river through a rain of fire and an uproar of thunder, on, on, on, she knew not where. Drifting, drifting, drifting, she finally dropped into a tired sleep, from which, ages after it seemed, she awakened with a bump. Looking about her, she saw that the Jester, the Idea and Jupiter were

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

beside her upon the top of a great rock. On one side of the rock there flowed a wide, swift stream of water, and all that part of Cloud Land through which they had passed was swept with a tremendous thunder-storm and cloud-burst.



"That's what Jupiter turned loose when he butted into that red cloud," remarked the Jester.

CLOUD LAND

"I do hope the Weather Wizard didn't get drowned," said Lucile.

"You can't drown a wizard," replied the Jester, "but I wonder what happened to the King."

"He'll come through all right," assured the Foolish Idea. "He's King of Why and the Cloud-People are bound to protect him. But how fine and warm it is on the other side of the rock. We're almost dry already. Let's go to sleep."

In another minute he was fast asleep and the others lost no time in following his example. And Lucile dreamed that the world was in flood again and that she was housekeeper on the Ark, which was being pursued by King Danno in an air-ship.

CHAPTER XI

THE POOLS OF A THOUSAND DREAMS

When they awakened, the sun was high in the sky. On the Cloud Land side of the great rock, the waters had gone down and it was quite dry. The movable sidewalk passed steadily before them into a bright, green country of chirruping birds and fragrant blossoms.

"Let us be going," advised Lucile, "for King Danno is sure to come out of Cloud Land just as he does everywhere else."

Without delay they took their seats upon the pavement and were soon bowling at a merry clip through the pleasant meadows, nibbling from the breakfast-food and buttered-toast trees as they went. They had not gone far until the pavement stopped suddenly beside a great, deep pool of yellowish stuff, which gave forth



"What a beautiful—" began the Foolish Idea

THE POOLS

a most pleasant smell and from which little puffs of steam curled up gently.

"I do believe it's Welsh rarebit," cried Lucile. "Mother used to make the best—and I was always so fond of it."

"It's more likely to be dandelion custard," suggested Nic-Nac; but, of course, Lucile knew this to be one of his foolish ideas.



"I'm going to taste it, anyhow," said Lucile. She dipped her right forefinger into the big vat and licked it. "Yum-yum!" she cried, and dipped for another bite.

Then a funny thing happened. It began to rain elephants. Great, awkward elephants, with snaky trunks and long, sharp tusks and red-and-gold cloths upon

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

their backs, fell from the sky so thick and fast that they shut out the green fields, the sidewalk and her companions from her sight. And, as the elephants hit the ground, they turned instantly into all kinds of queer things—cows, camels, windmills, soldiers, church-steeple, grindstones and wheelbarrows. A great, golden bell began to ring in one of the church-steeple, and all the animals, soldiers, wheelbarrows and things ran and jumped over the steeple. They did not come back to the ground, but continued to mount higher and higher into the air until they were out of sight.

Then the church changed into Lucile's mother, who asked the little girl when in the world she was coming back to Chicago.

"Not until I have found out how to grow silver thimbles from watermelon seed," answered Lucile, without in the least knowing why she talked so foolishly.

Then her mother became a great, leather-tailed crocodile, which sang a song about pickled peanuts so loudly as to hurt Lucile's head. And finally the crocodile exploded into a thousand pieces, and it rained ice-cream

THE POOLS

until the ground was covered and the delicious chocolate-flavored stuff climbed higher and higher until it was level with Lucile's mouth and she was almost frozen. She saw now that if the cream rose any higher she must both smother and freeze to death. So she began to eat the cream very rapidly. She was surprised to find that it melted in her mouth so easily that after a few bites it was all gone. And there stood Jupiter and the Jester and the Foolish Idea staring at her as if they were crazy.

"What did you say about green elephants?" inquired the Foolish Idea.

"And the world full of ice-cream?" asked the Jester.

"And wheelbarrows with wings?" said Jupiter.

"Why, you saw them yourselves," yawned Lucile.

"Wasn't it all queer? Where did they come from? Where did they go?"

"Where did who go?" asked all three at once.

"The camels and soldiers and windmills," said Lucile. "Didn't you see them?"

"Huh," snorted the Jester, "you've been asleep. I

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

thought you ought not to be eating that Welsh rarebit stuff. It always makes me dream that I'm carrying the moon around in my pocket."

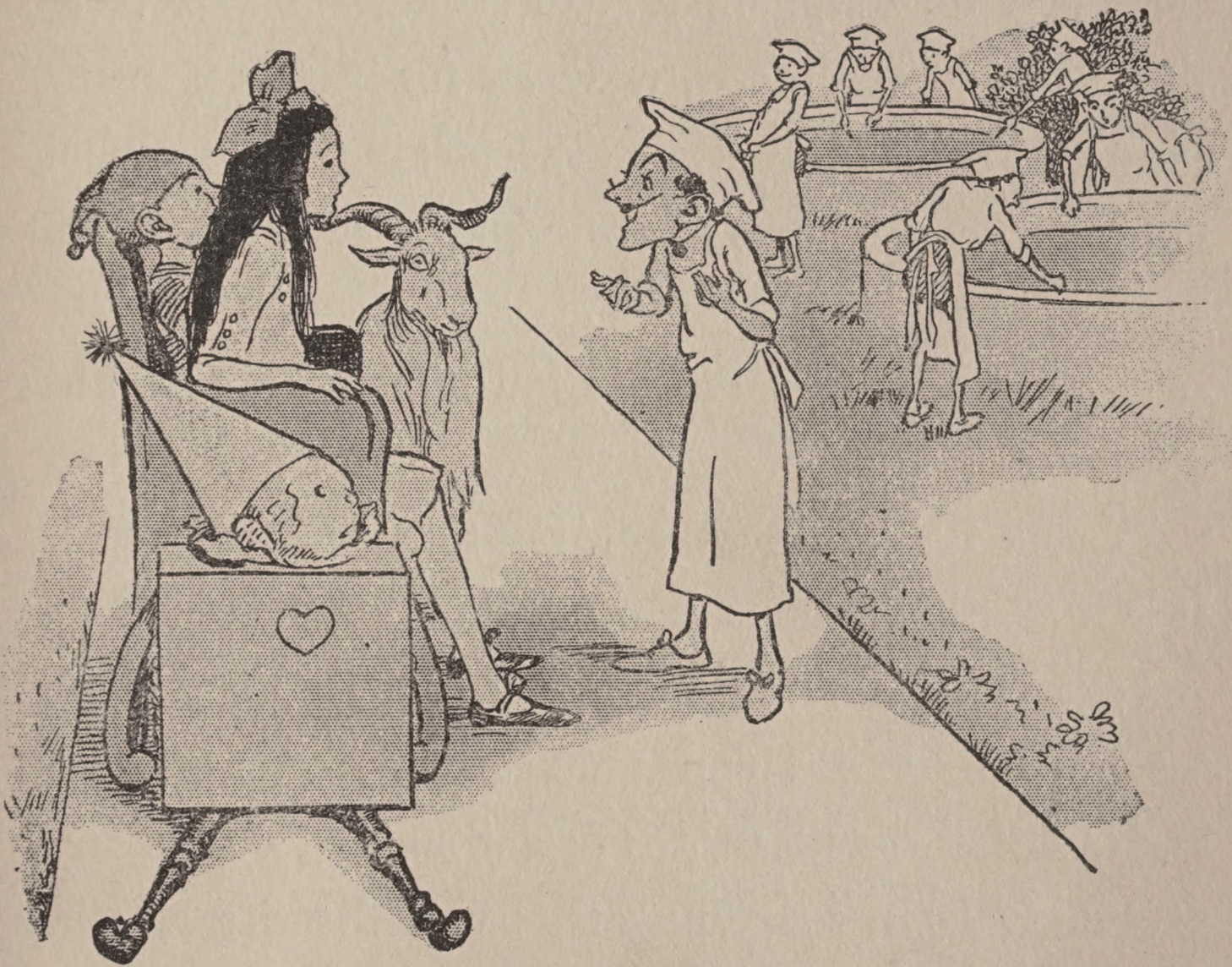
It was with difficulty that Lucile was convinced that she had actually dreamed the feverish dream from eating the yellow stuff in the pool. When she did understand, she desired to make all haste to get away from the spot. So they took their seats upon the movable sidewalk and were soon whisking rapidly through the beautiful country.

They had not proceeded a great distance until the sidewalk stopped again in the midst of a number of the pools. The huge vats were filled with steaming mixtures like the rarebit which had set Lucile dreaming, only they were pink and blue and green and other bright colors. All around the big vats were little people wearing white, cooks' caps and aprons, who stirred the mixtures with spoons and paddles and sprinkled various seasonings into them.

"Oh," cried Lucile, "I wish the pavement would go on! I am afraid I will have more of those queer dreams."

THE POOLS

As she finished speaking, an airy, Frenchified, little cook-man, with twirling, upturned mustaches, hopped upon the sidewalk. "Dreams, dreams, all kinds of dreams," he chirped. "This is the place where they are made. What kind will you have? Something



about purple zebras or singing mountains or fishes with forty eyes?"

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"No, indeed," answered Lucile. "I do not wish to eat any of the dream food. I tasted some of the rarebit back there and the things I saw were simply awful."

"Ho, ho!" laughed the airy fellow. "I dare say you had a funny dream if you ate that. It is our nightmare pool and we never offer it to strangers. But these dream-stuffs are different. Here, for instance, in the pink pool is the pleasant dream-stuff; in the green pool are the funny dreams; in the orange, sad dreams, and so on. Which do you prefer?"

"Give me a little of that red over there?" asked Jupiter.

"Very well," said the man, "but that is the silly pool. It is perfectly harmless, however."

Thus reassured, Lucile and her comrades each took a small taste of the dream-mixtures. Lucile and the Jester tasted the green, the Jester hoping, in a funny dream, to learn something that would assist him in making people laugh. The Foolish Idea, however, partook of the orange dream-stuff, as he felt sure a good, sad dream would render him less foolish.

THE POOLS

Lucile had no sooner swallowed the green mixture than four tigers, dressed in clown-suits and carrying guitars, stood upon one another's heads and sang a song, which ran like this:

“There was an old lady of Lynn,
Committed a terrible sin;
She stole kegs of nails
And lots of fish-tails
And drove them all into her chin.”

After the tigers had finished their song, they began to dance in the air fifty feet above the ground. With each step they took, they became a different color—orange, lavender, purple, brown, pink, blue. The sight so amused Lucile that she laughed aloud. She was greatly surprised to find that her laughing took the sound of a little bell tinkling in her throat. While she was still laughing—or rather, tinkling—the tigers began to make the most ludicrous faces at her and to wink their eyes and throw kisses. This caused Lucile to laugh all the louder. At this the bell in her throat set up such a great clanging that it awakened her from her dream.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

To her great surprise and dismay, she found King Danno standing right at her side. Around him were the soldiers of Why.

“Hello, Lucile!” cried King Danno. “Catching up with you at last almost makes me happy. Now you will have to be Queen Sugar-and-Spice the Fourteenth. Salute Her Majesty!” Then the King and the soldiers—and the Jester, the Foolish Idea and Jupiter, too, for they thought it was all over—bowed low before Lucile.

But Lucile began to cry, so that some of her tears ran down her face and into the green pool of funny dreams.

“Dear, dear!” cried the airy Dream-Mixer. “Don’t cry into the pool of fun—you will make it sad. Don’t you want to be Queen of Why?”

“No, indeed,” wailed Lucile. “I don’t want to be Queen. I’m an American girl and American girls are never queens.”

“It is too bad,” declared the little Dream-Mixer, “but we must give the King something to eat.”

THE POOLS

As he said this, he dipped into the pool of fun and presented some of the green mixture to the King and the soldiers. They were very hungry and ate without asking any questions. As soon as they had taken the first bites, however, they settled down upon the grass by the edge of the pool and fell into a deep sleep.



They were talking and laughing in their sleep, and the King was mumbling something about a yellow camel eating the moon. Presently he cackled aloud:

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Oh, ho! That was funny about the moon dancing with the walrus. I believe I’m happy for the first time in my life. I don’t think I’ll make Lucile Queen of Why. Oh, ho—ho, ho!”

“He is very happy now, while he is enjoying the funny dream,” whispered the Dream-Mixer. “But when he awakens, he will be seeking you again. You had better go.”

So with many good-bys to the kind Dream-Maker and his queer, little assistants, the comrades stepped again upon the movable sidewalk, which immediately sped upon its way. As they rode, Jupiter told them the red stuff had made him dream he was a tin can, which they all agreed was very silly. And the Foolish Idea declared the orange, sad-dream mixture had made him dream that his grandfather had the bronchitis. He had wept a lot throughout the vision, but was really glad he had dreamed so sad a thing, as he felt sure now he would not have another foolish idea in the course of the next three hours.

CHAPTER XII

THE LAND OF WISH-COME-TRUE

After a long ride, they crossed a beautiful, foaming stream of lemon phosphate and rested that night before a great gate made of what appeared to be an immense wish-bone turned upside down. The Jester told Lucile that he thought this must be the entrance to the Land of Wish-Come-True, as he had always heard that the country could be entered only by means of a gate constructed from a gigantic wish-bone. With the early morning sun they passed through the gateway and soon were speeding on their way through the smiling country.

As they went sailing along, Lucile heard the Foolish Idea give a great sigh that made his brass heart clang. "I wish I had some really wise ideas about such things

WISH-COME-TRUE

as biology and bibliography and hydraulics and tinnabulation," he exclaimed.

"I wish we could run across a bit of red scenery," sighed Jupiter. "This green is getting tiresome."

Then the Jester sighed and murmured, "I wish I could think of something funny to entertain us while we are riding along doing nothing."

"I wonder why every one is wishing things," remarked Lucile. "You know, I was just wishing something exciting would happen."

"It's because we're in the Land of Wish-Come-True," replied the Jester. "It's in the air to wish things, I suppose."

By this time the movable sidewalk had rounded a curve and stopped in the midst of a pretty, little city of beautifully colored, stone palaces and castles. Walking to and fro in the golden streets of the city were dozens of little men, wearing what seemed to be dunce-caps much like the one that reposed upon the cabbage-head of the Foolish Idea. Hanging from the neck of each little man was a wish-bone. As Lucile

WISH-COME-TRUE

and her companions alighted from the sidewalk for the purpose of stretching their limbs, one, who seemed to be the leader of the Wish-Makers, approached them.

"Good-morning," he said politely; "what do you wish?"

"N-n-nothing," stammered Lucile.

But the Jester put in quickly, "Oh, yes, you do. This is the best opportunity you will ever have to have a wish come true."

"Yes, every visitor to this country is entitled to one wish," explained the leader of the Wish-Makers. "Who will be first?"

"Lucile first," suggested the Jester. "Ladies always before Foolish Ideas and Jesters and goats."

The Wish-Leader invited Lucile to perch herself upon a high, green stool and to place her chin in her hands. In that way, he explained, she would be more able to think of a really good wish. Then he placed a pretty, pink cap upon her head and moved a wand rapidly before her face.

"Wish-tum-o-wish!" he chanted three times. Where-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

upon the top of Lucile's pink cap seemed to puff off and a score of brilliantly colored ribbons flew out the top and curled and kinked and wound and dangled in the air all about her head and face.



WISH-COME-TRUE

"Now wish," commanded the leader. "The beautiful, twirling ribbons are to make you have beautiful thoughts while you are wishing."

But, instead of causing beautiful wishes to flock into Lucile's head, the twirling, whirling ribbons so amused and attracted her that she could think of nothing good to wish at all. She thought and waited and thought again. And finally, in despair, she said aloud:

"Oh, I wish I could think of something really good to wish."

Instantly the ribbons ceased to whirl about her head, and the idea came to her to wish that she could see her mama and Daddy. Lucile knew at once that this was the one greatest wish of her heart. So she told the Wish-Leader that she desired to see her parents. But he shook his head and smiled sympathetically.

"You could have but one wish, and you had that when you wished for a really good wish. It is too bad, but it can't be helped."

So Lucile climbed down from the stool, feeling really worse than if she had had no opportunity to wish at all.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Next!” cried the Wish-Leader, and the Jester climbed upon the green stool, placing his head in his hands just as Lucile had done. The Wish-Leader chanted the mysterious words and waved his wand, releasing the colored ribbons from the Jester’s cap. But the Jester, unlike Lucile, had his wish all ready.

“I wish I could make somebody laugh so long and loud and hard that they could hardly stand it.”

The words were no sooner spoken than one of the little Wish-Makers opened his mouth and ha-ha’d so loudly as to cause the Jester to fall backward off the stool and bounce three times before he rested on the ground. The Wish-Maker laughed and cackled and crowed and gurgled until he became as red in the face as a pickled beet. His cap fell off; he tied himself into a bow-knot; he rolled and twisted upon the ground. And then his laughing, although as violent as ever, began to grow weaker and weaker. He was losing his breath and it was plain that he could not last much longer unless something was done to stop his awful fit of jollity.

WISH-COME-TRUE

"We shall have to tell him the saddest things of which we can think, and perhaps these will cause him to stop laughing," suggested the Wish-Leader, in alarm.

Thereupon he leaned over and said to the stricken laugher: "The old gray goose is dead."

But the little Wish-Maker only laughed the harder, although mixed with his laughing were pitiful sighs and groans.

Then the Jester stooped and murmured, "My heart is of rubber and can not break or burst, but it is becoming stretched out of shape because of your sad condition." But the little fellow laughed on.

Then the Foolish Idea whispered, "Little Bo-peep has lost her sheep." But even this sad news had no effect.

Now it was Lucile's turn, but she could not think of a single sad thing. "Oh, dear," she sighed, "I don't see why he couldn't put on the wishing-cap and wish he could stop laughing."

"How dreadfully stupid of us not to have thought of that!" cried the Wish-Leader.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Immediately a wishing-cap was placed upon the head of the sufferer. He was almost gone, but he managed to whisper, "I wish I could stop laughing." Instantly his convulsions ceased and he stood up, weak and worn, but practically unharmed.

"Next!" cried the Wish-Leader; and Jupiter hopped upon the green wishing-stool.

"I wish that all the world was red!" he cried, as soon as the colored ribbons were whirling about his head.

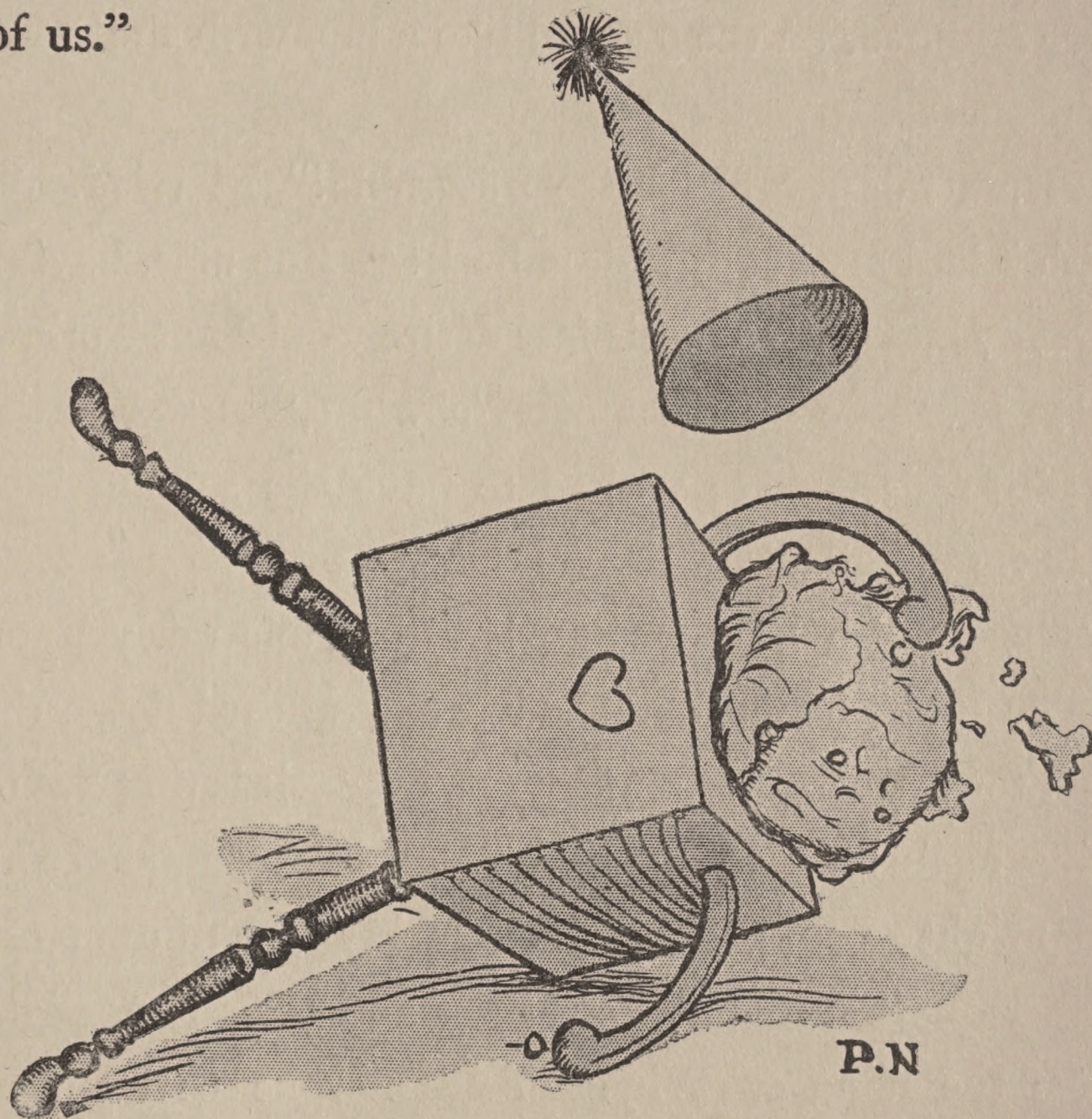
Instantly the ribbons ceased whirling and Jupiter jumped down from the stool. Lucile and the Jester, seeing no change in the color of anything, began to tease him. "Oh, Jupiter—you didn't get your wish!"

"Huh!" grunted Jupiter. "Your face is red as blood—the stool is red—the grass is red—everything is red. Oh, I am very happy now because I shall never, never have to look at green and violet and primrose and lavender colors again."

Lucile and the Jester winked at each other, for they thought that Jupiter was dreaming. But the Wish-

WISH-COME-TRUE

Maker said gravely: "Jupiter is quite right. He has his wish. You see, the world is all red for him and always will be, though it has not changed for the rest of us."



"Next!" cried the Wish-Leader, and Nic-Nac climbed upon the stool.

"I wish I could have a very solemn, sad idea for a while in place of all these silly, foolish ones," he sighed.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

No sooner had he said the words than the Foolish Idea began to weep and moan. His cries were heart-rending and he tore at his cabbage-leaf scalp and rolled over and over on the ground like a boy with the stomach-ache.

"I am miserable—oh, so miserable!" he cried. "I wish I had my foolish ideas back!" But alas, having already had his wish, this last desire would not work.

"He will be all right after a while," declared the Wish-Leader. "He wished to have the solemn idea only for a while."

The Foolish Idea was still rolling miserably upon the ground when a loud shouting was heard down the road toward Dream Land. "Oh, dear—it is that awful King again!" cried Lucile. "He always manages to keep right at our heels." She quickly recited the story of her quest of the Sapient Sage and their long flight from the King of Why. "And now he will get us sure," she finished. And, indeed, there seemed to be no way of escape.

But the Wish-Maker, who had been thinking deeply, spoke:



The old fellow took Lucile by the hand

WISH-COME-TRUE

"I tell you. You get on the sidewalk and move on. When the King comes, he will desire to make a wish that he may capture you very soon. But I shall put the wish-cap on his head upside down. This will make his wish reverse, so that he will not come up with you again for a long time, and perhaps not until you get quite to the Sapient Sage."



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

He had hardly finished before the King and his soldiers came galloping up, hallooing for Lucile to stop. But Lucile and her companions had jumped upon the sidewalk, which was rushing them away from the country of the Wishing-caps. Looking back, they saw that King Danno was sitting upon the green stool and that the Wish-Leader had the cap topsy-turvy upon his head.

“I think we may rest easy now for a while,” said the Jester. “But I think we have learned a lesson about wishing for things we do not have. For none of our wishes brought us pleasure, except Jupiter’s—and Jupiter is only a goat.”

“But a very happy goat, since the world is red as a two-cent postage-stamp,” put in Jupiter.

CHAPTER XIII

INVISIBLE LAND

After they had ridden for some hours, the pavement crossed a pretty bridge of pure crystal, spanning a murmuring stream of pink lemonade. As they sped through the fresh, rolling meadows on the other side, Lucile sighed deliciously.

“What a beautiful, green country!” she exclaimed.

“What a beautiful, red country, you mean,” corrected Jupiter.

“What a beautiful—” began the Foolish Idea, when the pavement stopped suddenly and all were dumped overboard in a heap on the thick grass by the side of the highway.

Lucile, picking herself up, looked about her for her companions. They had disappeared. What was

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

more, the sidewalk, the trees, the green grass, the rolling plains, the ground itself—everything—had disappeared. It was not dark. Everything was just gray or whitish, like air, which, of course, looks like nothing at all.

“Nic-Nac—Jester—Jupiter—where are you?” cried Lucile, in alarm.

“Here! Here! Here!” they all answered in the same tremulous tone. “But where are you? We can’t see.”

“I can’t see my hand before my face—” began the Jester, only to bump into Lucile so hard that the little girl sat sharply down upon the invisible ground, and the Jester bounced back a hundred feet.

“We had best take hold of hands and walk that way,” advised the Foolish Idea.

“But where shall we go?” asked the Jester, who, guided by the sound of their voices, had felt his way back. “We can’t see the road and may fall into a river or over a cliff. We had better sit right here.”

“And starve to death,” moaned Lucile. “This is

INVISIBLE LAND

worse than the Dismal Darks. But listen—what is that?”

“Hullo—hullo there!” a squeaky voice was calling out of the blanket of white nothing.



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“Hullo!” answered the Jester. “Who’s there?”

“I am the Incus-Dinkus, of Invisible Land,” came the voice. “This way.”

“Coming!” shouted the Jester, and started in the direction of the voice, the rest of the party strung out behind him and holding hands.

“Look out—gully!” warned the squeaky voice, but it was too late. The Jester felt suddenly that there was nothing beneath his feet. And then he was tearing and bumping and rolling and bounding down and down a steep hill, which, it seemed, never, never would have an end. Behind him, atop of him, under him, alongside him, rolled Nic-Nac, Lucile and Jupiter. Finally they came to a sudden halt on what they judged to be a grassy plain. The patter of many feet was heard behind them, and then the squeaky voice came out of the fog.

“Whew—such boobies!” it squeaked. “Why didn’t you take the upper road? Why did you want to go bumping down Transparent Hill like a lot of Jacks and Jills?”

INVISIBLE LAND

"We couldn't see any road. We can't see anything," grumbled the Foolish Idea.

"Ho, ho!" laughed the voice. "How many fingers am I holding up?"

"One," guessed Lucile.

"Two," said the Jester.

"Three red ones," bleated Jupiter.

"None—ha, ha!" squeaked the voice. "I forgot you were mere mortals and couldn't see the sights of Invisible Land. Now, to us everything is plain as day. But you will be tired and hungry after that tumble. Come into the Palace of the Unseen and rest."

They were now conducted into what, judging from the sounds, must have been a vast chamber filled with scores of busy people. It was necessary for the attendants of the Incus-Dinkus to push Lucile and her comrades into chairs and slide them up to a great table. Knives and forks were put into their hands and they were invited to eat; but their struggles with the meat and beans and bread, which they could not see, were so pitiful that the Invisibles were finally compelled to

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

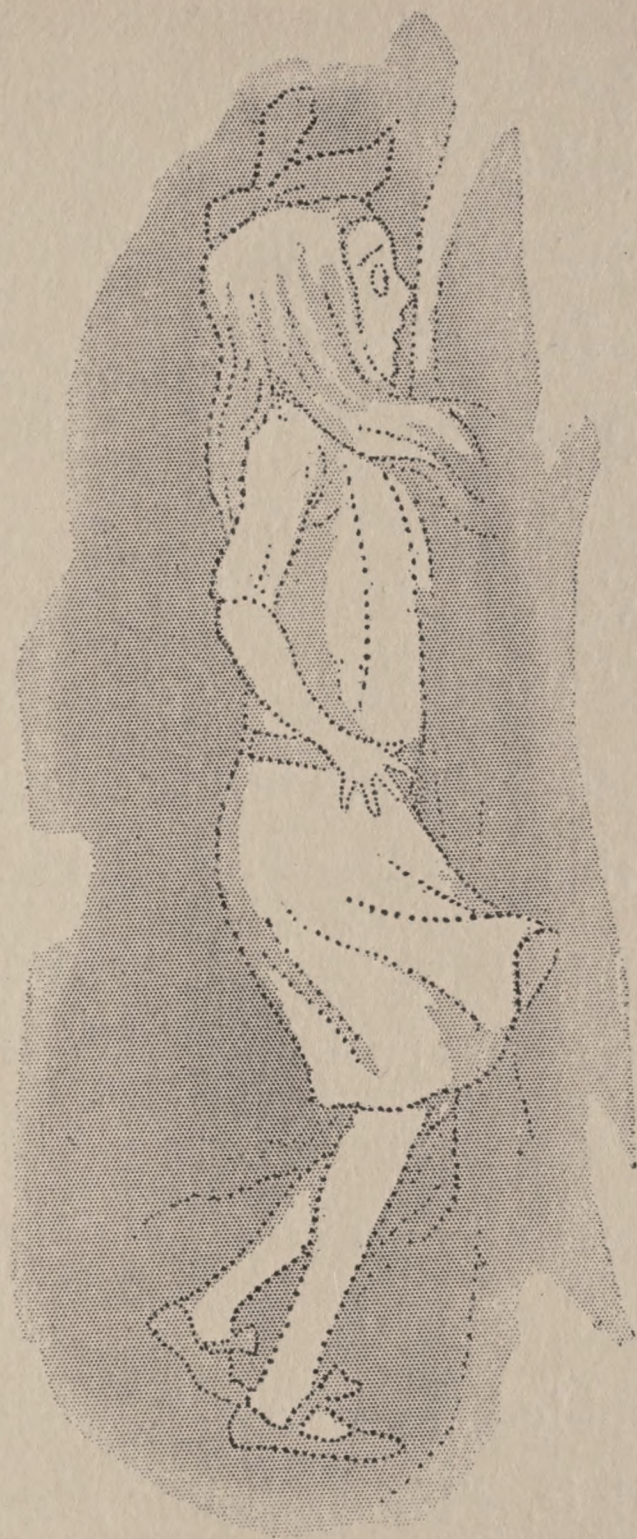
take the food into their fingers and poke it into their visitors' mouths. Even with this assistance, the Foolish Idea nearly choked to death through having a great piece of pork poked down his throat when he wasn't looking for it.

After eating, they rested before an invisible fire into which Nic-Nac stumbled and almost burned his table legs before he could be pulled out. After this, guided by a couple of the Invisible Men, they set out for the movable pavement.

They had not proceeded far before a terrible, lion-like roaring was heard a short distance to their right. Instantly the guides let go and ran, crying, "The Woofs—the Woofs—run for your lives!"

Lucile had never heard of a Woof, but she knew that anything that could make so frightful a noise and so terrify the Invisibles must be something dreadful indeed. She did not know where to run, but she set out in the direction from whence came the patter of the fleeing Invisibles. The first steps she took landed her against the trunk of a great tree, almost flattening her dainty nose.

INVISIBLE LAND



“Look out there!” cried the Jester, bumping into her back; and, “Look out there!” cried Jupiter and the Idea bumping into him. Joining hands, the companions turned to the right and struck blindly out into the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

gray-white waste of nothing. Of course they had to come to another hill and bump and roll their way down it. This time, however, they did not come to rest upon a grassy plain. Instead, Lucile felt something cold and wet slip up around her ankles, her knees, and finally her arms. It was water.

"Dear me! We have fallen into a river!" she cried.

"Float," called the Jester. "I'm hollow and shall float nicely. The rest of you hold to me."

And, indeed, this arrangement worked beautifully, the Jester floating easily on the surface of the swift stream, while the others sustained themselves by holding to his rubber toes and arms. Finally they felt solid bottom beneath them and all clambered out upon the bank.

"Br-r-r-r!" trembled the Idea. "I wonder where the movable sidewalk is. The Invisible Men were taking us in this direction when the Woofs woofed."

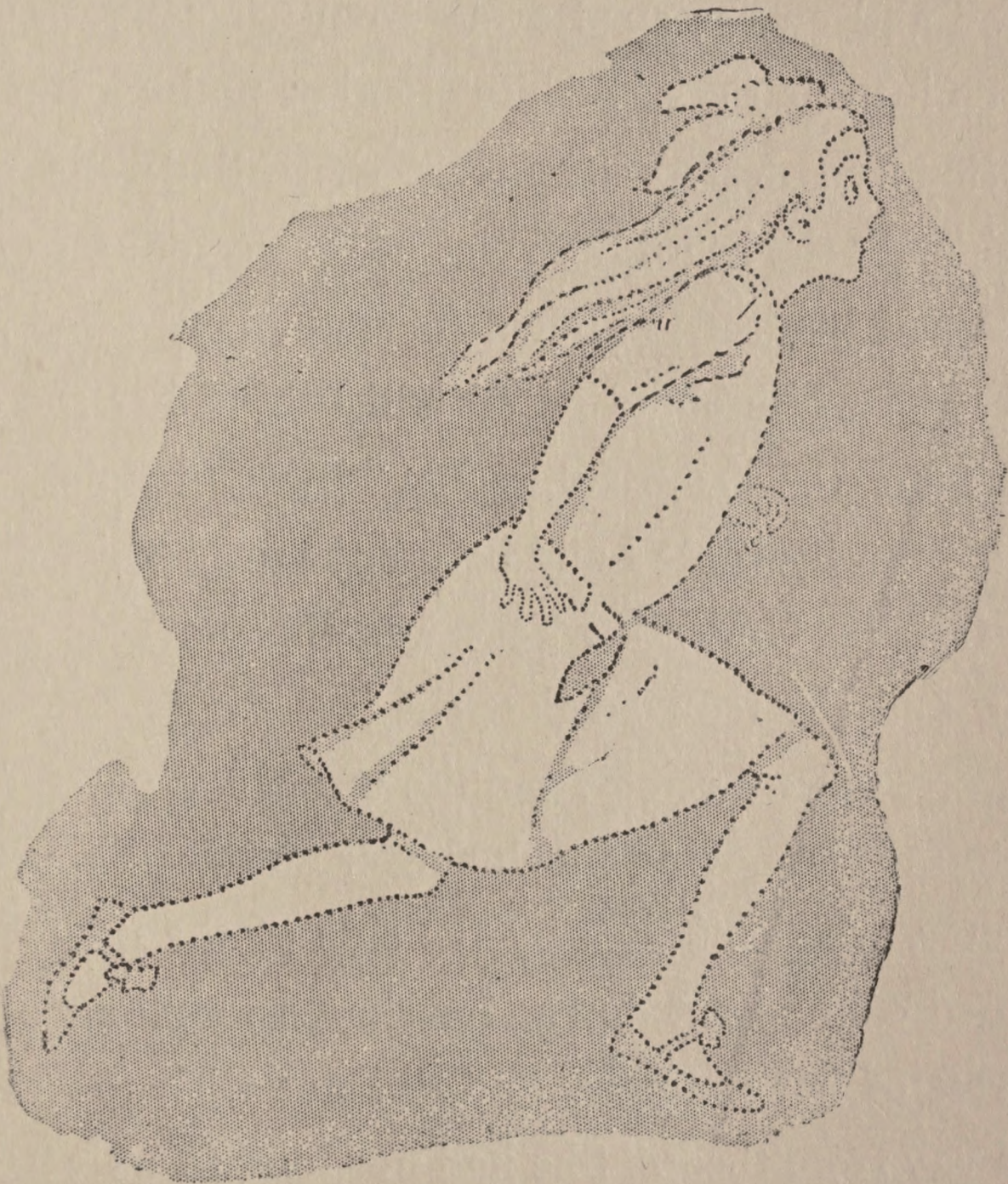
"I wonder what became of the dreadful Woofs," shivered Lucile.

As if in answer to her question, there came out of

INVISIBLE LAND

the white cloud almost at her elbows an awful howl, deep, hoarse and threatening—"Woof—woo-hoo—woo-hoo—woo-hoo!"

Lucile, scared almost out of her wits, sprang away from the fearsome sound. She had taken but three or



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

four steps when she felt her feet jerked from under her and herself swept through the great, white cloud at a very rapid pace, though she did not know in the least where she was going. On and on she sped. There was nothing pulling her, nothing pushing her, yet on and on she sped away from her comrades, on and on into that great, white cloud of nothing but air.

“Nic-Nac—Jester—Jupiter!” she called; and once she thought she heard the voice of the Jester afar off.

She had just settled down for a good cry when suddenly the white cloud lifted and behind her she saw once more the beautiful, green hills and dales they had seen in Invisible Land before the gray-white cloud had fallen. Under her feet was the movable pavement, and she realized that she had stepped upon it unawares when fleeing from the terrible Woofs. The platform was moving much slower and Lucile, seeing a pretty, wooden bench by the side of the pavement, stepped off and sat down, for she was anxious about the rest of her company and did not wish to get too far away from them. She had not long to wait before

INVISIBLE LAND

the striped Jester hove into sight. Close behind him were the Foolish Idea and Jupiter.

“It’s good to be where one can see things once more,” sighed the Idea as he came up.

“Ah, the world’s all good and red again,” chimed in Jupiter, with a hearty goat-sigh.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MUSICAL LAND OF MEZZO

After their exciting adventures in Invisible Land, the comrades were very tired. The sun was high in the sky the next morning when, much refreshed by their long sleep, they started upon their way. So vigorous did they feel and so pretty was the gently rolling country before them, they left the movable highway and walked alongside over a winding path lined with bright and fragrant blossoms.

After Lucile had taken a few steps down this little lane of flowers, she found herself actually dancing her way. Looking back to see if the others had noticed her actions, she saw that the Jester and the Idea were executing graceful, little hop-steps. Even Jupiter was prancing like a circus-horse when the band plays.

THE MUSICAL LAND

"How very, very funny," cried Lucile, "that we should be dancing—" She stopped suddenly, wondering what was the matter with her voice, for she had sung her words to the tune of "Bobby Shaftoe."



"Ha, ha!" cried the Jester. "We shall now have a song by Miss Lucile—" He stopped in amazement, for he was singing his own words to the tune of "Yankee-Doodle-Do."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"I think it is to be a song by the Jester," sang the Foolish Idea, in a thin, little, piccolo voice.

"Oho!" sang Jupiter. "I think we'll have to make it a quartette. Oho—baa-baa—boo-lee-ooh!" Jupiter's tones poured out like the deep bass notes of a pipe organ.

"I don't especially wish to sing," warbled Lucile, in a pretty tune she had never heard before, "but it seems that I can't help it. Oh, dear, what strange, strange places there are in the Kingdom of Why."

She pulled a nodding dandelion from the highway. As it snapped, the flower-stem gave forth a little musical "ping." Much interested, Lucile plucked at another blossom, producing a sweet-toned "tinkle" such as might come from the twanging of a guitar.

"Why, even the flowers are musical in this land," sang the Jester. As he warbled this, he idly tossed a stone across the road. As it fell into the highway, it gave out a "plumpety-bump" like the tremor of a drum. Considerably excited, he picked up another stone and made it skip along the road. As it bounded down the

THE MUSICAL LAND

path, jumping and bumping, it gave forth a "pink-pank-punk-boom," just like the scales Lucile had heard her mother play on the piano in the front room back in Chicago where her father read the big, black books.

As they danced along the road, skipping and whirling and keeping perfect time, they learned more and more that they were, indeed, in a merry land of music. On one side of the path was a beautiful water-fall, and the water, tumbling over the rocks, made a soft, low music sweeter than anything Lucile remembered ever to have heard on any instrument. A slight wind came up, rustling the leaves on the trees, and the leaves gave out the sweetest, most silvery tinkling. Presently the Jester, who was dancing faster than he could move his weak, rubber legs, stumbled and fell over on his face. "Plinkety-plank!" went up the clearest strains, and then, "plinkety-plankety-plunk!" as he bounced into the air and bounded and rebounded.

"Oh, listen!" sang out the Jester. "I'm a whole brass band and operatic concert by myself." He jumped high into the air, allowing himself to fall upon his

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

side, then bounce and bounce and bounce, each time bringing forth a sweet “plunkety-plinkety-plank” and making one of the prettiest tunes any of them had ever heard.



“Now if I could only have done this back in the Purple City,” lamented the Jester, in a kind of a singing sigh, “I could have made King Danno laugh himself almost to pieces. Then he wouldn’t have been unhappy and Lucile wouldn’t have to be running away like this.”

“Then I wish you had been able to play your bounce-bounce tunes,” sang Lucile. “But listen—what is that?”

THE MUSICAL LAND

From around a curve in the road came the prettiest music they had yet heard. It was so exquisite, so enticing that they danced around the corner to discover from what wonderful instrument it could possibly come. But on rounding the curve, they were greatly surprised to find that the delicious strains were being produced by a long-haired, dreamy-eyed, little man sitting on a rail fence and rubbing a broom-stick against an ax-handle.

“Dear me!” sang Lucile, in two little, tinkly, treble notes. “You don’t mean to say you are making all that wonderful grand-opera music on two pieces of wood?”



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"I can do more than that," sang the little man. "I can play 'Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son' on a corn-cob and 'Rock-a-bye, Baby' on a knitting-needle and a peanut-shell. But maybe you would like to hear the grand orchestra of the Musical Land of Mezzo?"

With that he conducted them to a great, round tower, in the lofty windows of which were dozens of little men holding in their hands all sorts of queer things—pitchforks, barrel-staves, bed-slats, screw-drivers, can-openers, lamp-chimneys, tin pails, feather-dusters, pie pans and toothpicks.

"Tune up, orchestra!" sang out the little man, who seemed to be their leader.

Instantly all the little men jumped out of the tower, alighting from as high as the seventh and eighth stories without appearing to mind it at all. Only as each one landed there was a loud "buh-lin-n-n-ng-ling-ling" like the twanging of a gigantic harp.

"Now," sang the leader, "let us have 'The Bullfrog on the Bank,' and play well, for you have an audience of strangers."

THE MUSICAL LAND

Immediately the little men who had jumped from the tower began to brandish or scrape or pound their queer instruments. Some scraped baseball bats upon fence-rails, some blew through gas-pipes and rubber hose, some picked on mattress-springs and curry-combs, others pounded on oyster-cans or water-buckets or silk hats. But whether they blew or picked or scraped or pounded, they one and all made music so delicious that Lucile and her companions could not keep their feet still. Round and round they danced—one-two-three, one-two-three—round and round, ever faster, ever more lively until Lucile began to fear she would actually dance her head off. Then of a sudden, while she danced in a ring with the Jester and two of the little musicians, she missed the Foolish Idea.

“Where is Nic-Nac?” she sang.

No sooner had she sung the words than the exquisite strains of the orchestra changed suddenly into most horrid discord. The baseball bats and corn-cob, which had been producing delicious, violin-like music, now gave out noisy, clattery slaps and bangs and pound-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

ings. The pans let out a hideous clanging. Everything was bang-crash-boom-wow-bing-zizz-bump-pop-plunkety-tunk. The merry, little musicians dropped their instruments in amazement.

"Flutes and fiddle-strings! What has happened?" exclaimed the orchestra leader. Instead of singing the words, they came from his throat in a harsh and ugly growl.

"What is the matter? Who did it? What put us out of tune?" screamed and whined the members of the orchestra.

Their outcries, once so musical and pleasing, were now but growls, grunts, howls, yelps and groans. Lucile was terrified at the sudden change and, fearing that in their anger they might accuse her party of causing the trouble, began to run. Each step she took, instead of making a musical "ping," now brought forth an ugly "plunk!" The patter of Jupiter and the Jester behind her came harsh and clattery like the noise made by a cat walking over the keyboard of a piano. After running a considerable distance and seeing that the

THE MUSICAL LAND

musicians were not pursuing them, they slowed down.

“Dear, dear! I wonder what changed the pretty music into grunts and groans,” growled the Jester.

“But where is the Foolish Idea?” whined Lucile.



“I wonder if we shall always make such ugly noises when we talk?” bleated Jupiter.

Lucile stooped and picked a pretty buttercup.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

As it snapped, the stem gave an ear-splitting screech —“Ooh-oo-oo!” The Jester threw a little rock across the path. As it bounced, it screamed and wailed and yelped in a frightful fashion. The wind, coming up, moaned through the trees so piteously that Lucile shuddered.

“Dear, dear, dear!” she whined. “I never saw such a dreadful change—”

She stopped abruptly in wonder, for although she had begun her words with a whine, her voice had changed suddenly into a pretty song.

“Here comes Nic-Nac!” sang out the Jester, once more to the tune of “Yankee-Doodle-Do.”

They sat down and waited, and in another minute the Foolish Idea had caught up with them. But his cabbage-face, usually a greenish white, was tinged a deep red like the red cabbage one sees at times in the market. His potato-eyes were cast down toward the ground and he put up altogether the most shamefaced and woe-begone appearance.

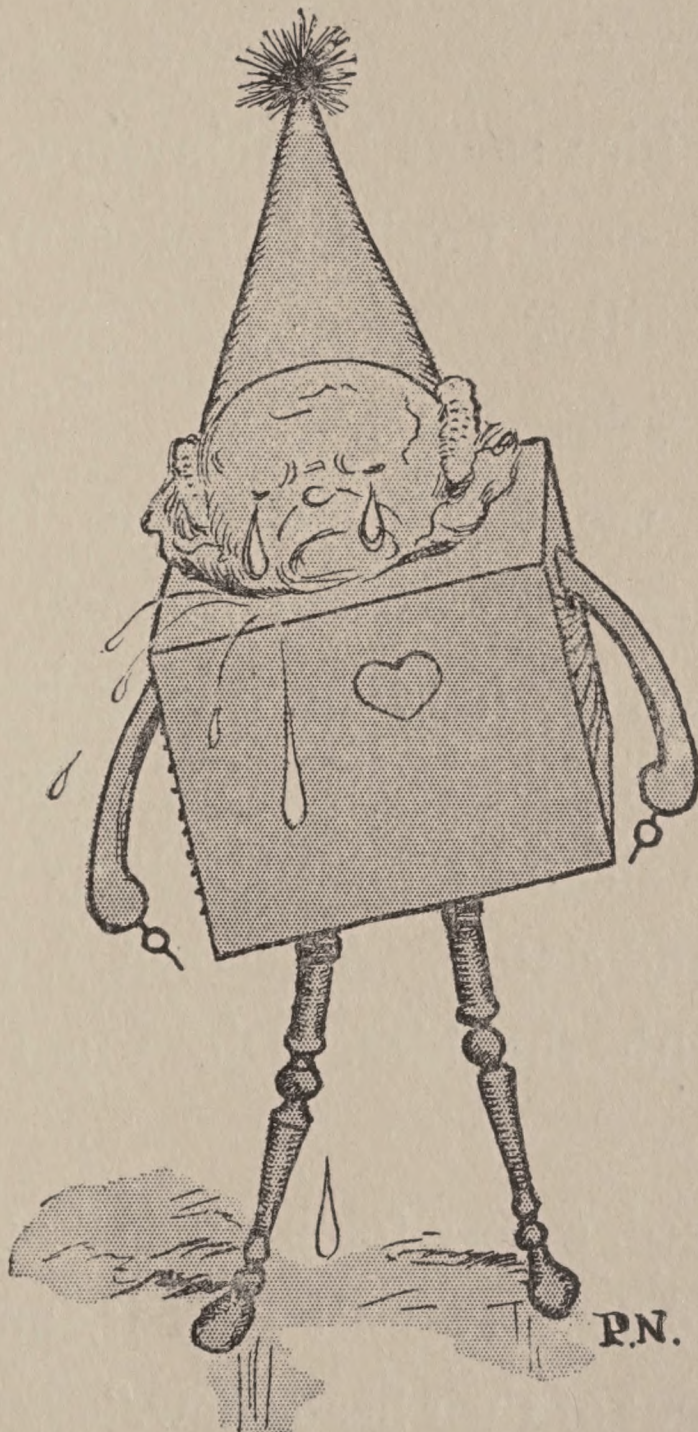


"Excuse me," said the Jester, addressing the long-faced man

THE MUSICAL LAND

“Nic-Nac!” they all cried. “What is the matter? What has happened to you?”

Great tear-drops welled from his potato-eyes and splattered down upon his cedar chest. “I have gone back to my foolish ideas,” he sobbed. “After all these



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

weeks of trying to think only of sober, serious things such as constitutions and confectionery and battle-ships and botany, I have become silly once more. Oh, it is shameful—it is wicked—boo-hoo!”

“But what has happened? Tell us about it—there, don’t cry.”

The Foolish Idea smote his shiny brass heart with his wooden chair-arms, producing a most musical clang. “I did it,” he wailed.

“Did what?” asked Jester.

“I changed the beautiful music into hideous discords. I became so excited with all the playing and dancing that my old foolish ideas began to come into my head. I thought how funny it would be if the delicious music should change suddenly into a lot of pop-biff-bang-and-clatter. And then I popped into their heads with the idea. Oh, I am very much ashamed!”

“It was, indeed, a very foolish idea,” agreed Lucile, “but you couldn’t very well help it, and you have taken the idea out of their heads now.”

THE MUSICAL LAND

"I shall try harder than ever not to be foolish, even for a minute," promised Nic-Nac.

"And that is all any one can do," declared Lucile. "And now I think we had better be on our way before this musical air gives you any more foolish ideas."

With that they stepped upon the moving platform and sailed upon their way while the breeze played soft, sweet music in the leaves.

CHAPTER XV

THE PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

After they had ridden for some time, the wind, as it blew through the cranberry-tart trees and orange-marmalade vines, ceased to play little tinkle tunes, so that they knew they must be out of the fair land of Mezzo. It was not long then until they became aware of a buzzing, humming sound, such as a swarm of bees would make. This grew louder and louder until they discovered that the buzzing was caused by a lot of old men with black gowns, gray wigs and huge, green spectacles, who were working busily with paper, pens, globes, charts and yardsticks, and talking to themselves as they worked. One of the old men, who seemed to be directing the work, hopped upon the platform.

"Welcome, friends," he said, in a pleasant, high-pitched voice. "Where are your problems?"

PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

“Problems?” repeated Lucile. “Dear me, I haven’t thought of a problem since the last one Miss Curtis gave me about John Jones and the three pigs he sold to Hiram—Hiram Smithers, I believe was his name—”

“Ha, that’s good!” interrupted the old man. “We are always looking for new problems. You know, this is the Province of Problems where all the puzzles of state and society and the universe are worked out. Come this way, and we will set the Munificent and Magnificent Imperial Solver of Questions of Arithmetic and the Figurative Sciences at work on it.”

“But I don’t care to have it solved,” objected Lucile. “I’m not at school now.”

“Oho!” cried the old man, becoming suddenly angry. “So you have a problem you don’t care to have solved, have you? And what do you think Problem Province is for, pray? We shall soon see.”

With that, the old fellow took Lucile by the hand and almost dragged her to a platform where a yellow, wrinkled, very comical-appearing, old man sat working over some kegs of paint, a brush and a globe like the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

one with blue seas and yellow nations and pink Dominions of Canada which had always sat upon Miss Curtis' desk.

"This is Professor Mighty Wise," explained their conductor. "He is just now working on the problem of why the sky is green and chocolate, but he can always take time for a new problem."

"Green and chocolate!" repeated Lucile in amazement. "But the sky is not green and chocolate. It is blue and pink and yellow—"

"And red," put in Jupiter.

"But never green and chocolate," said the Jes-
ter.

"Fiddlesticks!" exclaimed Professor Mighty Wise. "I wonder I never thought of that. That is why I haven't been able to solve it. But what is your problem?" He reached for a piece of paper and stood ready to write.

"I—I—I don't remember all of it," faltered Lucile. "And besides it doesn't the least matter."

"Tut, tut!" snapped both their guide and Professor

PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

Mighty Wise. "No foolishness, Lucile. We must have the problem."

Lucile thought very hard until her pinkish brow was almost as wrinkled as that of Professor Mighty Wise. "It was something about, 'If John Jones—' "

"Wait a minute," interrupted the Professor. "How do you spell that?"

"J-o-n-e-s," spelled Lucile.

"How very funny!" cried the Professor. "Go ahead."

" 'If John Jones,' " continued Lucile, " 'sold three pigs to Hiram Smithers for five dollars each, and'—let me see—yes, 'and if Hiram Smithers traded the pigs to the storekeeper for—for—' Oh, dear, I can't remember what it was for—it has been so long ago."

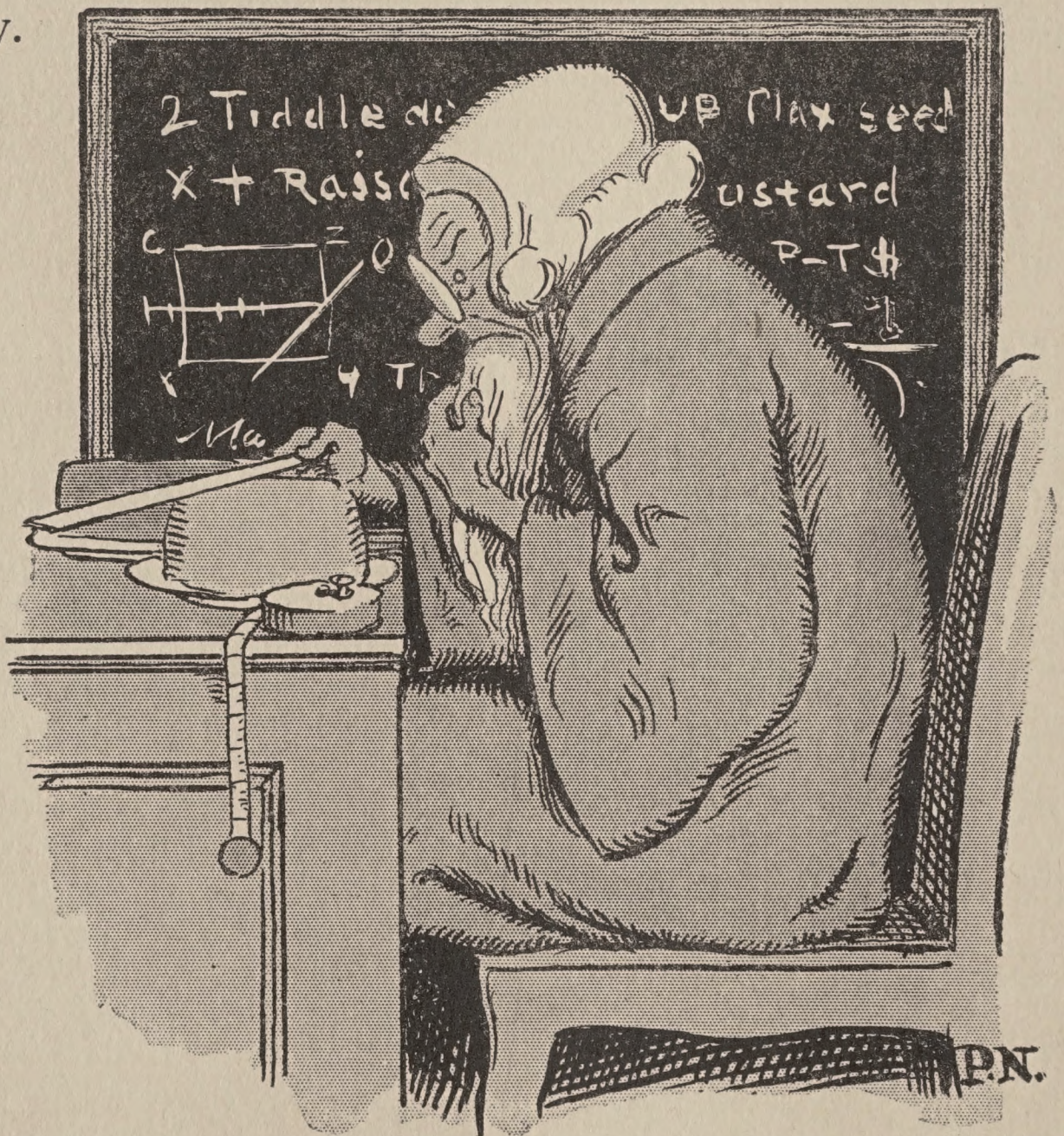
"Hot buckwheat cakes, maybe?" suggested their conductor.

"Or a bushel basket full of camel fur," said Professor Mighty Wise.

"Oh, dear, no," cried Lucile; "it was nothing like that, I'm quite sure."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Those are good enough," declared Professor Mighty Wise. "Now, go away. I must set to work on the problem." He turned from Lucile and began a great buzzing and figuring. The guide led the comrades away.



"This is the Department of Good-to-eat Problems," he explained, as they stopped at a desk at which another

PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

of the old men was engaged with a lot of very tempting pound cake, a rule, a blackboard and a tape measure. "Professor Know-it-all is working on the problem of why pound cake is yellow. It is a very pretty problem. Professor Big Head, over there in the Department of Miscellaneous Mysteries, is solving the problem of why is a pea-shooter? The one next to him is working on the problem of who killed Cock Robin? Oh, it is extremely interesting."

"Very," agreed Lucile, the Jester, the Idea and Jupiter.

For an hour or more their guide took them through the different departments of the problem work, showing them here a professor engaged in the solving of the problem of why pigs have four feet, and there another earnestly figuring how much the Man in the Moon weighed. By this time it was growing late, and the Jester suggested that they had better be on their way.

"How are we to continue on our way to the Sapient Sage?" asked Lucile.

The conductor stopped short and puckered his fore-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

head. "Ah, now," he said, with great satisfaction, "that is a problem."

Lucile could have told him that she was weary of problems, but he began to call aloud to all the old men, who came running.



"A problem—a brand-new problem!" he announced. "Problem No. 5,149,783, How is Lucile to get out of Problem Province?"

The old men wrote rapidly in their memorandum books.

PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

"We must have a yardstick and a map of Switzerland," declared one.

"And a compass and a lot of pink chalk," said another.

"How old is Lucile?" asked a third. "And what are the names of all her aunts and uncles?"

"I am nine," answered Lucile, "and there's Aunt Lou and Aunt Elsie and Uncle Paul and Uncle Jim. But I don't see what that has to do with our getting on our way—and I do wish you would hurry."

"Don't interrupt!" snapped Professor Mighty Wise.

Lucile was ready to cry, but there was nothing to do other than sit upon the grass while the old men continued what seemed to her to be very silly figuring. While they worked they kept up a great buzz of remarks which it did not seem possible could have any real bearing upon the problem of how to get out of Problem Province.

"Two times four is eight," buzzed one, "turn to the right at the seventeenth dandelion and hurry."

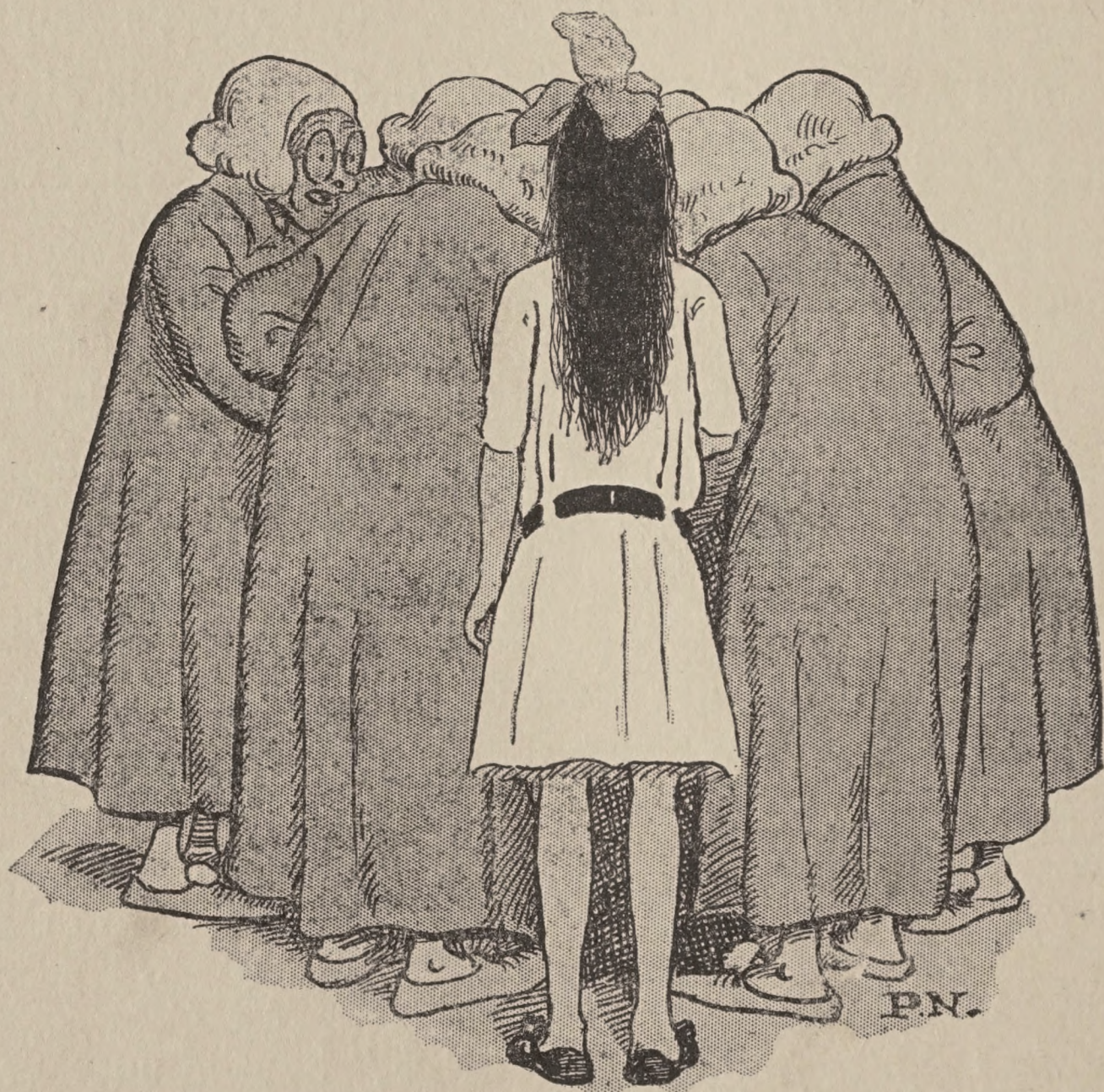
"Half a mile from nowhere much," buzzed another,

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“then turn around and inquire of the first one-eared rabbit.”

“Up the hill and down again—forty-nine pumpkin rows—and half-way to Norwich,” sang a third.

Suddenly Professor Know-it-all called out, “I have it—I have the answer. Come quick!”



PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

All the workers immediately dropped their calculations and came running. Lucile sighed with relief and crowded in close.

"What's the answer? How do we get out?" she asked.

"Ho, ho!" shouted the professors, all at once. "Lucile wants to know the answer."

"Of course, I want to know the answer," insisted Lucile, with spirit. "I want to get on our way."

The guide shook his head until Lucile feared it would come off. "We don't give out any answers," he declared. "If we did, there would soon be no problems left."

"But how am I to get to the Sapient Sage?" insisted Lucile.

"Oh, that's the problem," said the conductor.

She could get no more from him, and the professors returned to their problems. There was nothing to do but to pick out a snug place to spend the night, and this they found beneath a gigantic, mince-pie tree. Lucile sobbed herself to sleep, for it looked as if she was to

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

remain all her life as a problem in this land of foolish problems. She could not have been asleep long, however, before a touch on her shoulder awakened her.

“Come on, Lucile,” the Foolish Idea was saying. “I have the way out. I found it in the place where they keep all their answers.”



PROVINCE OF PROBLEMS

He showed her in the light of a small lantern he was carrying a tiny iron box labeled "Problem No. 5,149,783—How Lucile can get out of the Province of Problems." Turning a key, the Foolish Idea brought out a slip of paper on which was written:

"TURN OVER"

"Turn over!" echoed Lucile, and involuntarily she threw herself over on her right side. The next instant she was rolling rapidly, yet smoothly, down a grassy hillside, and the whirling and bobbing of a light behind her showed that the Foolish Idea and his companions were rolling after her. In another minute she bumped gently against an obstruction, which in the light of the Idea's lantern proved to be a great gate set in a wall of pink stone and marked "Exit." The Jester slid back the big iron latch of the gate and they walked through. On the other side was the movable pavement. They threw themselves upon couches and were soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAND OF DREADFUL STORY-TELLERS

When they awakened from a long, refreshing sleep, the comrades looked out upon a pretty, level land of green fields and fragrant hedges thickly populated by a tribe of little folk, who were dressed so oddly that Lucile hardly knew what to make of them. The oddest thing was that the men, with long beards or curling mustaches, went about in pink, red or yellow dresses; while the women, with fair, clear skins and long, flowing hair, wore coats and trousers and twirled canes. Also the old men and women wore short skirts or knee trousers, while the children had on such garments as old men and women might be expected to wear.

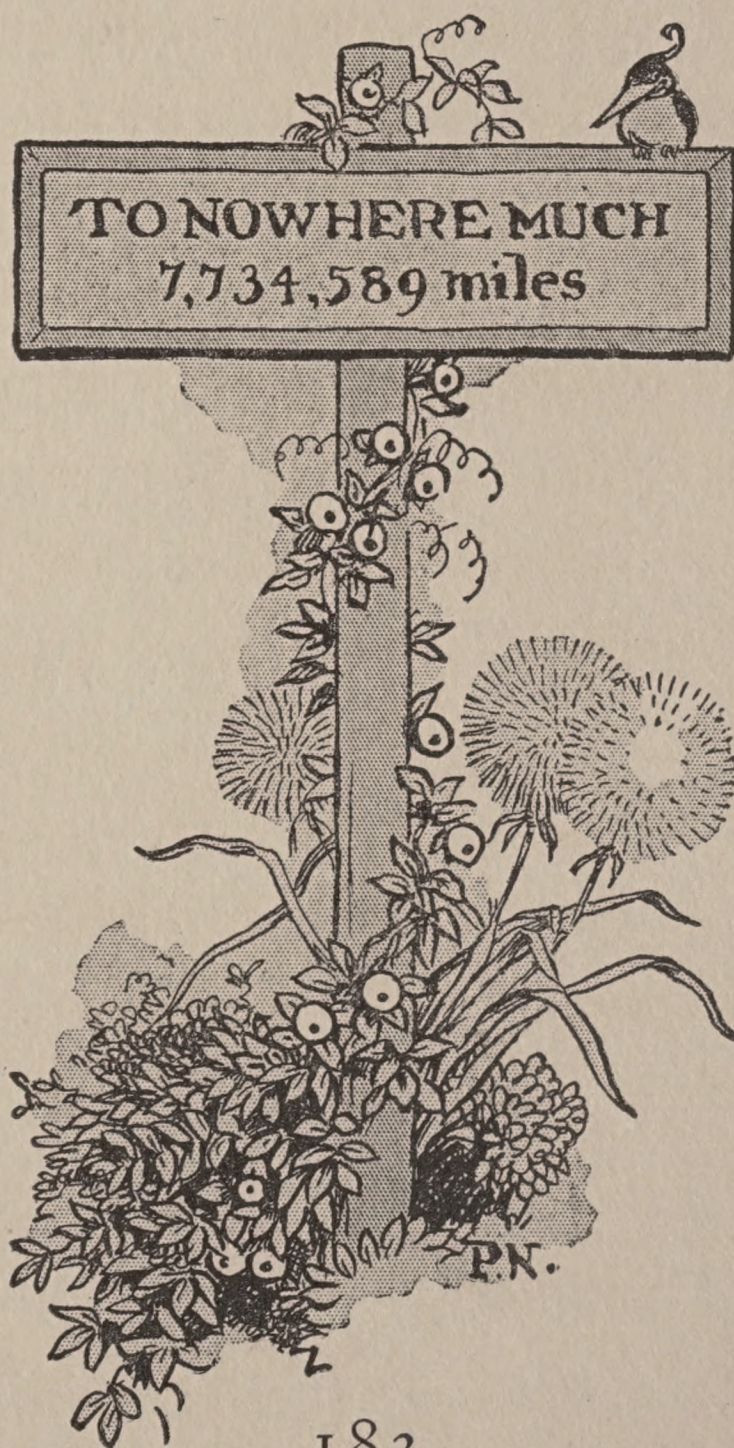
“This must be Upside-Down Land,” puzzled the Jester, twisting his rubber neck almost out of place at such an unaccustomed sight.

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

"Here is a sign-board," announced Lucile. "We had better get off, I suppose."

The party alighted from the platform and approached a sign-board which pointed away from the movable pavement. On the board were these words:

"TO NOWHERE MUCH—7,734,589 miles."



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Dear me," sighed Lucile, "if it is that far to a place where they have breakfast-food and bananas and cream, we shall get very hungry."

"If it is so many miles to Nowhere, it ought not to be so far to Somewhere," replied the Foolish Idea. "Let us go down the road a bit."

The road turned a very sharp curve where it crossed the movable sidewalk, and they had hardly rounded this before a neat, little town of colored-glass houses stretched out before them.

"What a misleading sign!" exclaimed Lucile. "It said ever so many million miles to Nowhere, and here is a town already."

As she was speaking, a group of the queerly dressed natives approached.

"My good people," said the Jester, hopping up to them in a series of little bounces, "what is the name of this place?"

"Hop-over-my-thumb-ville," answered an old man attired in a baby's long dress.

"Pickle-and-pop-town," declared a young girl, dressed in a long, black coat such as ministers wear.

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

"It hasn't any name," shouted several others.

"What a queer place, where nothing is what it seems," sighed the Jester. "Here is an eating-house. We had better go in."

The house to which he pointed had a sign over the door:

THE GOODY-GOODY EATING-HOUSE:

Pies, Pickles, Jam, and Everything to make a First-Class Stomach-Ache.



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

When they poked their hungry mouths inside the door, however, there was nothing inside except two little men in mother hubbards beating some horseshoes on an anvil. This was positively everything there was to be seen.

"It is probably an old sign," ventured the Jester. "We must try some place else."

"Here is a place to eat," called the Foolish Idea, who was a bit in front. "I can see the good stuff through the window. Yum-yum, it makes my mouth water."

"I can see a lot of pies and goodies, too," agreed the Jester, "but look at the sign above the door." They looked up and read:

JEM JUNK SHOP

Special Bargains in Hobgoblins, Dishwater, Old Shoes, Blizzards, Lizards, Rusty Nails and Mouse Tails.

On entering the house, however, they found neat, white-aproned waiters, one of whom conducted them to a round table and asked them what they would have to eat.

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

"Oatmeal, brown, buttered toast, and bananas and cream," ordered Lucile.

"Roast beef, onions and gravy—something solid and capable of producing ideas not so foolish as mine," said Nic-Nac.

"Lady fingers, egg-kisses and soda-water. I want light, frothy things to make me funny," suggested the Jester.

"Lobsters, beets, tomatoes—anything red," said Jupiter.

In a short time the waiter returned with their orders, which he placed on the table before them. Everything looked very tempting and they could hardly wait to begin. But as soon as Lucile had taken one bite of the brown toast, she made a funny face.

"Ooh," she cried, "this is a mud pie. I will not eat at such a place."

"My lady finger is a piece of white rock," declared the Jester. "If my teeth had not been of rubber, they would have broken."

"My roast beef is a lump of coal," said the Idea.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“And my tomatoes are croquet balls,” growled Jupiter.

“We will leave this place at once,” declared Lucile, stamping her foot. “Nobody tells the truth here—not even the signs.”

The whole party was hurrying out the door when an old, graybeard of a man, dressed in a chintz gown, appeared in the entrance.

“Here, here!” he exclaimed. “What is all this bother?”

When Lucile and her companions had finished with their indignant complaint, the old man roared with laughter.

“Oh, ho—ho, ho—ha, ha! Why you are now in the Land of Dreadful Story-Tellers, and you must take everything by opposites. If you want huckleberry pie, order mud pie; if you want sugar, order sand; and if you want milk, call for ink or mucilage. Nobody tells the truth in this country. It is all dreadful story-telling, all lies, all whoppers and yarns and fibs. We just can’t help it—and it is such fun.” And he went off

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

into another great roar of laughter, in which the other Dreadful Story-Tellers joined.

Lucile, who was not so much amused, thought a bit, then asked the waiter to bring her a mud pie with soap-suds and brickbats and glue. The Jester and the



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Foolish Idea ordered the opposite of what they really wanted, and Jupiter requested a lot of things sky-blue, chocolate and lavender—anything but red. The result was that they were soon eating a delicious meal of just the things they had wanted in the first place.

As Lucile was finishing her second big piece of huckleberry pie, she was startled by a nudge in the side from the Foolish Idea.

“Won’t you have a piece of this fried rainbow, Lucile?” he asked. “It is the best I ever ate.”

“Rainbow!” repeated his listeners.

“Yes,” replied the Idea, “you know, the rainbow is fine fried, although some people like it best mixed with a piece of the North Pole and a little star-shavings and then boiled.”

“My streaming stripes!” cried the Jester. “The Idea has come to be a Dreadful Story-Teller.”

“I am the King of the Cannibal Kids—and my name is Captain Eat-the-blood-of-an-Englishman,” declared Nic-Nac, very solemnly.

Lucile sprang from her chair and hurried toward the

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

door. "Come, Nic-Nac, Jester, Jupiter—let us leave this Land of Dreadful Story-Tellers at once. I do not tell stories, and I do not wish to begin now."

The Jester and Jupiter were close at her heels. The Foolish Idea came, too, although he announced that he was going to visit his old friend, the Man in the Moon. The eating-house was quite out of sight of the movable sidewalk, and it was necessary to ask the old graybeard Story-Teller to direct them. He pointed out the direction, and the comrades, with the Idea in the rear, made off. After they had followed the road around bends and over bridges for a long time, the Jester stopped.

"We certainly did not come this way," he declared. "The old fellow must have told us one of his dreadful stories."

"Here is a sign-board," Lucile pointed out. "It says, 'This way to the Movable Sidewalk—a hundred steps, one long jump and a hop and a half.'"

The travelers lined up at the sign-post and took the necessary steps, the jump and the hop and a half. The action brought them to another sign-board, which

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

pointed back from whence they had come and which read:

“493 TICKS TO THE MOVABLE SIDEWALK.”

“It means ticks of a watch,” announced the Jester.
“That is not far.”

“It means seed-ticks,” said the Idea.

When they had retraced their steps for about eight minutes, they came to another sign-post, pointing at right angles from their present course, and reading:

“TO THE MOVABLE SIDEWALK—14 DICKEL-
VITCHES.”

“How much is a dickelvitch?” wondered Lucile.

“It is half-way to Chicago and back,” answered the Idea.

Lucile stamped her foot at him. “That is another of your dreadful stories, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself.”

“I am,” wailed the Idea, “I am really sorry, Lucile. But I can’t help it since I ate that delicious roast beef.” Great tears formed in the potato-eyes of the Idea and splashed over his cedar chest and table legs.

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

"We shall never, never get out of this awful land of fibs and whoppers," cried Lucile. "Oh, I wish I was back in Chicago. I would never bother my Daddy with questions about what makes the sun set and why roosters crow and whether the sea is as deep as the sky."

"I have an idea," declared the Jester, suddenly.



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

“You know, the old Story-Teller said to take everything by opposites in this country. Now, if we go in a direction just contrary to that in which the sign-board points, we ought to find the movable pavement, although I am sure none of us knows just how far fourteen dickelvitches is.”

Following the Jester's advice, the comrades took a course opposite to that in which the sign-board pointed, and in a very short time found themselves once more seated comfortably in their chairs upon the pavement. Here they were all very cheerful again, except for the Foolish Idea, who was weeping profusely.

“I must tell you some more dreadful stories,” he sobbed. “I don't wish to, but I can't help it. I suppose I shall always be this way, and thus I shall be more foolish than ever. Listen. I was born under the sea. I have nineteen wives. My name is Francis Fiddlesticks. I am a telegraph-pole maker by trade, and I am 987 years old—”

“Oh, do hush,” interrupted Lucile. “Try not to tell such dreadful stories. Try hard.”

LAND OF STORY-TELLERS

"I am t-t-t-trying," blubbered Nic-Nac, "but I can't help it. Here are some more: I am the man that painted the sky blue. One time I fell in a Swiss-cheese hole and broke my leg. I can eat tigers alive—"

"Look, look!" broke in the Jester. "See that beautiful fountain of sparkling water, there by the side of the pavement? The sign says 'The Fountain of Big, Black Lies,' but, taking everything by opposites, as you have to do in this dreadful country, it would really be the Fountain of Truth. Let's wash the Idea's mouth in it, and I imagine he will be cured."

"That is a good idea," said Lucile. "Let us try it at once."

Alighting from the platform and hurrying Nic-Nac to the fountain, they ducked his cabbage-head into the bubbling waters and scrubbed vigorously at his mouth.

"I am King of the Canary Birds," he spluttered. "I am a crocodile, and I eat a house for breakfast every morning—"

"Scrub harder!" shouted the Jester, and they worked yet more briskly. Presently the Idea ceased his foolish

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

blubbering and then, gasping and half-choked with water, he stammered:

“There—that will do, my good friends. I am cured—I think I shall never tell a dreadful story again. Oh, I feel so much better.”

“We do, too,” answered Lucile, as they settled back upon their couches. “We were very sorry to see our companion, the Foolish Idea, turn into an ugly teller of fibs.”



CHAPTER XVII

THE LAND OF LAUGHS AND TEARS

They traveled steadily all day and all night. Next morning, when they awoke, the movable pavement was standing quite still on a great plain, divided into two parts by a long, white line such as is used to mark a tennis-court. Standing squarely on the line was a signpost bearing two boards pointing in opposite directions. On one was painted the inscription:

“THIS WAY TO JOYVILLE AND THE HEIGHTS OF DELIGHT.”

The other board had these words:

“TO GLOOM CITY AND SORROW TOWN.”

As they were reading the signs, a little, long-bearded man approached and bowed gravely.

“This is the Land of Laughs and Tears,” he an-

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

nounced. "Will you go to Gloom City and Sorrow Town, or do you desire to see Joyville and the Heights of Delight? It is for you to choose. You know, it is left to every person in this life to be happy or gloomy as he sees fit."

"Is that so?" asked Lucile, in wonder, for she had never thought of this before.

"Oh, yes," replied the long-bearded man. "Which do you prefer—happiness or sorrow?"

"I think—that is, I know, I should much rather be happy," answered Lucile; and the Jester and Jupiter nodded their heads emphatically.

"I don't wish to be contrary, but I feel that if I went to Gloom City I might pick up some sad ideas that would not be so foolish," declared Nic-Nac. And as there seemed to be something in his remark, the others agreed that their guide might conduct them thither.

The little man bade them follow him and they walked briskly for some minutes along the road to the left. Presently they came to a great, deep river, which was as black and ugly as the Chicago River, where the

LAUGHS AND TEARS

waters were made dirty and greasy by the manufactories.

“This is the River of Tears,” explained their guide, as he conducted them over the bridge that spanned the disagreeable stream. “It is fed by the tears of the people of Gloom City and Sorrow Town and Miseryburg, who do nothing all day but weep and mope and wail. Whenever the inhabitants hear of a cold wave or a bad crop of chocolate drops or a rainy holiday,



they weep much harder and then there is a tear-flood. Once when they began to cry very hard for fear there might be a bad peach-pie crop sometime, it washed this bridge away.”

“It seems very silly to me, when they might live on the other side of the white mark and be happy,” remarked Lucile.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"It is silly," declared the little guide. "All moping and pouting is silly."

On the far end of the bridge they met a man dressed in black from head to foot, who stood gazing sadly into the black river. His face was the longest Lucile had ever seen on a human being, in fact it reached down over his breast almost to his belt.

"Excuse me," said the Jester, addressing the long-faced man, "but may I ask you if all the citizens of Gloom City have as long faces as you possess?"

"No, indeed," answered the long-faced man, very proudly. "I flatter myself I have the longest face this side of Dejectionapolis. You see, I never allow myself to think about anything except bad crops and hard times, and thus my face gets longer every day. After a while, I will begin to think of measles and mumps and other diseases and perhaps my face will become long enough to touch the ground."

"I think that would be very, very ugly," Lucile could not help saying.

As they proceeded, the comrades became aware of a

LAUGHS AND TEARS

strange sound like that made by the wind when it howls around the house on winter nights. It made them shudder to listen.

“That is the Wind of Sighs, caused by the wailing of the inhabitants of Mopeville,” the long-bearded guide explained. “And here,” he said, stopping before a great hole in the ground from whence issued the most doleful moans, “is the Cavern of Groans. Here sink the groans and grumblings of the citizens of Gloom City.”

After this, they walked steadily until they came to a great city entirely surrounded by a high stone wall of a jet-black shade. From the walls of the city floated black flags, and over the entire place hung a great, dark storm-cloud. From inside the walls came a noise of wailing and screaming, which was extremely unpleasant to hear.

Their guide knocked for admittance and the great gate of the city swung back. The comrades marched into a city of gloom. The houses were of stone, of

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

black, brown and gray shades. The streets, the houses, the robes of the citizens were of the same dead hue. Nowhere was there a sign of color or gaiety, nowhere even the tiniest streak of pink or crimson or purple or old-gold or blue. Of course, everything was red to Jupiter, but he complained that it was the dullest, most unsatisfying red he had ever seen.

All of the inhabitants were weeping and wailing and wringing their hands. Their conductor approached a knot of the Gloomers and inquired what was the particular subject of their present sorrow.

"London Bridge has fallen down," wailed one.

"But that was hundreds and hundreds of years ago," declared Lucile, in surprise.

"Suppose it was," retorted the Gloomer, "it was an awfully sad affair." He began to wring his hands and weep with new vigor.

"I am crying about the Flood," moaned another of the Gloomers.

"I am afraid there will be no sweet potatoes year after next," wailed another.

LAUGHS AND TEARS

"What if the sky should fall?" cried one.

"Or if the world should turn over!" groaned another.

Lucile began to wring her own hands. "Dear, dear," she cried, "I have seen enough of your Gloomers, of



Gloom City. Let us go back to the Land of Laughs."

"Yes, indeed!" chimed in the Jester and Jupiter.

"Oh, my potato-eye!" cried the Foolish Idea, suddenly. "I am afraid the air will freeze."

"There," said Lucile, "the Idea has turned Gloomer. He will be more foolish than ever, if he is going to have these gloomy ideas."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

The Jester and the long-bearded man grasped the Idea by the hand, and they all passed out the great, black gate and turned their faces to the Land of Laughs. The Foolish Idea, however, wailed and groaned, expressing ideas more foolish than ever before.

“Maybe some day I might have lockjaw in my right toe!

“What if the sea should turn to jelly!

“I am afraid Lucile will change into a hobgoblin and bite off my cabbage-head.”

He continued with his sad but foolish ideas until they had him over the white line that divided the two countries, when he braced up and gave a long sigh of relief. “I tell you, my good comrades, I am glad to be out of the City of Gloom. It is better to be a plain Foolish Idea with a cabbage-head and a cedar chest than to be an idea both foolish and sad.”

In the Land of Laughs all was bright and beautiful. Birds were singing, the sun shone brightly, the roads were lined with ripe fruits and fragrant blossoms. Ev-

LAUGHS AND TEARS

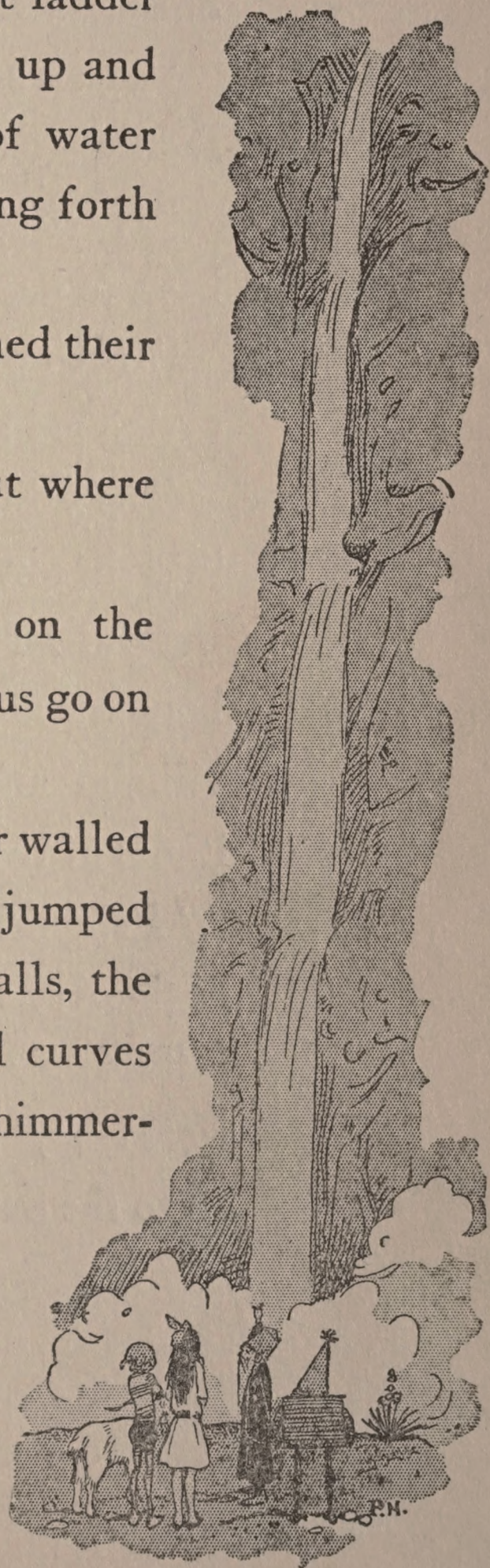
everywhere was color—red, blue, yellow, orange, green, pink, purple. The whole land was like a sweep of the rainbow. A pleasant, musical sound like the cooing of babies came to their ears. In another minute they stood at the foot of what seemed to be a great ladder of clear and beautiful water, reaching up, up, up and still up to the sky itself. The great sheet of water trickled down in a long series of cascades, giving forth the musical sound that had attracted them.

“These are the Ripples of Laughter,” explained their conductor. “Are they not beautiful?”

“Indeed, they are,” responded Lucile. “But where does the water come from?”

“From the Fountain of Mirth away up on the Heights of Delight,” said the guide. “But let us go on to Joyville.”

He led them in a few minutes' walk to another walled city, but this time Lucile and her companions jumped and danced with glee at the sight. For the walls, the streets, the houses were laid out in wonderful curves and crescents, sparkling with brilliant lights, shimmer-



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

ing with the richest and most varied colors. The citizens wore robes that might have come from the rainbow itself, and they were singing and shouting merrily to one another.

"The world is a beautiful place," one of the Joyites shouted to the travelers.

"I love to live," cried another. "I have never, never been so happy before."

"Just think how happy we can make one another," exclaimed a third.

The Jester became so excited that he bounded high into the air, came down with a great bump and, stretching out his rubber body into a big ball, bumped and bounced and rolled all over the pleasant city of Joyville, greatly to the merriment of the delightful inhabitants of the place.

"I should love to live here always," he declared as he finally settled down much out of breath.

"Indeed, I should, too, if my mama and Daddy were here," said Lucile, "and if I did not have to hurry on to the Sapient Sage to keep King Danno from mak-

LAUGHS AND TEARS

ing me Queen Sugar-and-Spice-and-Everything-Nice the Fourteenth.”

The long-bearded man looked up with a grave face. “What’s that?” he asked. “King Danno of Why? Is he seeking you?”

Lucile explained the reason for their journey.

“I have news that the King reached the Land of Laughs yesterday and is camping with his soldiers in the Valley of Bliss,” said the guide. “You had best hurry on. I will conduct you to the movable sidewalk, and I will also endeavor to detain the King by any means in my power.”

Within five minutes, after bidding their kind conductor good-by, the comrades were once more upon the pavement and scudding merrily along the line that divided the Land of Laughs from the Land of Tears. And one may be sure that they turned their faces wholly toward the bright and beautiful Land of Laughs.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SAPIENT SAGE

On the morning of the next day Lucile opened her eyes with a feeling that the pavement was not sailing over the face of the ground as usual. As soon as she had time to gather her wits, she realized that the sidewalk had ceased to move altogether, that, indeed, it had come to an abrupt end at the foot of a great rock, large enough and hard enough to have stopped the progress of twenty movable sidewalks. She was wondering how they would ever be able to proceed upon their journey without the aid of the pavement which had served them so well when, lifting her eyes to the top of the great rock, she beheld something that made her shiver.

It was a very, very old giant of a man, with a face wrinkled and yellow and a snow-white beard so long

THE SAPIENT SAGE



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

that he had coiled it like a sash around and around his huge body finally tying it into a knot in front of him. The upper part of his body was twisted into the shape of a horseshoe, opening in front, giving him the appearance of a living question-mark. The aged giant squatted upon the rock directly overhanging the couches of the comrades, and regarded them with what seemed to Lucile to be a very terrible and very evil countenance.

Lucile stood gazing at the crooked-backed giant until she felt as if she were being slowly drawn into his burning, black eyes. Presently she found herself speaking.

“Please, Mister Giant—or Sir Giant, I suppose I should say—what is this land? And how can we find the Sapient Sage?”

“Fee-fi-fo-fum—questions again!” cried the old giant, in a voice so thin and piping that Lucile immediately lost a great deal of her fear of him. “After running away from the court of King Danno and seeking peace and quiet on this rock, am I to be forever

THE SAPIENT SAGE

pestered with people who want to know things they've no business knowing?"

"Oh!" gasped Lucile, catching her breath with the sudden knowledge that her long journey was ended. "So you are the Sapient Sage?"

"That's the second question in two minutes," complained the Sage, "right now while I am figuring how many quills in the back of a gray porcupine three years old next Fourth of July. And I suppose all these friends of yours will want to be popping questions, too?" He pointed a yellow, claw-like hand toward the Jester, the Idea and Jupiter, who had been aroused by the conversation.

"Yes, indeed," began the Jester, "the first thing I want to know is—"

"Tut, tut!" interrupted the Sapient Sage. "The first thing you get to know will be the last thing, I can tell you. Do you suppose I shall squat here a year to answer silly questions? Now each of you can ask one—just one question, you understand. And get

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

busy—and be brief. I have to weigh a star or two before dinner-time.”

Lucile stood and gazed at the Sage much as she had done at the first sight of him. She could hardly believe that she was at the end of the long journey from the Purple City—or, indeed, from Chicago, for it was there that she had first started out to learn about things. Now that she stood before the Sapient Sage, she could not think of one thing that she really desired to know. She had seen so many strange scenes and picked up such a lot of things since she had left King Danno’s palace that she felt as if she really had no great desire to learn any more. Still she felt that, after all the toil and travel she had undergone, she ought to ask and obtain the most valuable bit of information left in the world, but she could not, for the life of her, think what this could be. There were the questions with which she had so often bothered her Daddy—let’s see, what were those questions anyhow? Dear me, she had actually forgotten all of them. There was one she remem-

THE SAPIENT SAGE

bered though—something about why did crocodiles sleep with their mouths open, and another about why were there warts on pickles—

“Hey there, you!” bawled the Sage, in a voice suddenly grown terrible. “Just ten seconds left. What’s your question?”

Lucile found herself staring at his long, gray, winding beard. She wondered how many, many years it must have taken the Sage to grow the long, white whiskers. She could think of nothing else. And before she realized it she was asking, “I wonder how old you are, Sir Sage?”

“Two thousand, four hundred and sixty-three years, nine months, two weeks, six days, eleven minutes, forty-nine seconds and seven ticks,” promptly responded the Sage. “Next?”

Lucile sat wearily back on her couch. Now that she had asked her one question, she knew that the answer could do her no possible good. Still she had seen so many wonderful and interesting things in the course of her journey that she felt well satisfied with the result—

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

if they could but get safely back to the Purple City and to Chicago and to her mama and her Daddy. But the Foolish Idea was talking to the Sage, and she leaned forward to listen.

“Please, Sir Sage, tell me how to be wise and not foolish. All my life I have been a poor Foolish Idea



THE SAPIENT SAGE

good for nothing except to make people laugh and do silly things. I wish to be wise and serious. Tell me this one thing, oh, Sage.” Big tear-drops fell from the potato-eyes of the Idea and splashed upon the floor of the platform.

“And I seek to know how to be funny, how to make folks laugh, ha-ha, giggle and be gay,” the Jester was saying. “All my life I have tried to bring forth laughs, but have succeeded in making only sighs and grunts and groans. Tell me this, the why and how of laughing, oh, Sapiient Sage.” The Jester became so earnest that he stretched his rubber neck until the top of it reached almost into the face of the giant.

For a minute the Sage sat scratching his long, white beard. Then he slapped his knees with his hands.

“Oho!” he cried out. “This is purely a case of exchange.”

“Exchange?” echoed the Idea and the Jester.

“By all means,” said the Sage. “One of you seeks to be more serious, the other to be more foolish. One can do nothing but silly, laughable things, the other can not

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

make people laugh. It is a matter of exchanging your talents."

"But—but I haven't any talents," stammered the Idea.

"Oh, yes, foolishness is quite a talent," replied the Sage. "Here, stand still, both of you, and gaze into my eyes."

As the Idea and the Jester stared fixedly into his eyes, the Sage passed his hands about in the air, muttered some strange words, then seized the Jester and, stretching his rubber body, wrapped it around and around the Idea, until Nic-Nac gleamed with stripes like any barber's pole. Then, taking the Idea by his cabbage-head and the Jester by one foot, the Sage gave them a mighty spin, which resulted in Nic-Nac whirling about like a top and the Jester bouncing forty feet away as he unwound.

When he had finished spinning, the Idea heaved a great sigh. "Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492," he declared, very gravely.

THE SAPIENT SAGE

"That's right," nodded the Sage. "There's nothing foolish about that idea."

"George Washington was the first President of the United States," continued Nic-Nac. "Paris is the cap-



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

ital of France—the earth revolves around the sun once a year.”

“Splendid,” approved Lucile. “Nic-Nac has become as wise as any school-teacher. Now let us hear from the Jester.”

“Rippety-kippety-kink!
The world is about to sink;
The rivers and seas are turning to cheese,
And the blue sky’s changing to pink,”

recited the Jester.

“Ha, ha, ha!” laughed Lucile and the Sage. “How dreadfully funny—ho, ho!”

The Jester bounced in glee. “You laughed—both of you laughed!” he cried. “At last I am a really funny Jester. How splendid!”

“The capital of Woodson County, Kansas, is Yates Center. Ten dimes make one dollar. Mt. Aconcagua is 23,200 feet high,” continued the Idea, strutting about in his new pride.

“How very, very wise!” murmured Lucile, lost in admiration of her once foolish friend.

THE SAPIENT SAGE

“If a little cat is a kitten
And a little cow is a calf,
Is a little mat then a mitten
And a little hog just a half?”

pattered the Jester.

“Oh, dear—oh, dear!” laughed Lucile. “I know you would make King Danno laugh his sides sore now.”

“But there’s your goat,” put in the Sage. “He must have a question. Let’s get through.”

Jupiter ambled up to the seat of the Sage. “Please, Sir Sage,” he began, “I have just had a very fine thing to happen to me, in that all the world has turned red. But sometimes, as happened yesterday in the City of Gloom, the red is a dark, dirty, dismal red. What I should like very much to know is how to have this red a bright and cheery red such as all goats adore—the kind of red you see on a tomato can or a circus poster, for instance.”

“Oh, yes,” answered the Sage, “surely there can be nothing easier.” Reaching into a satchel that lay at his side, he brought forth a large pair of spectacles.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"These are the Magic Spectacles of Hope and Joy. Looking through them, the world will always be a beautiful, goat-pleasing rose-color. Of course, if one is always hopeful and joyful, the world will be just the right color, anyhow. But these things can not always be expected of a goat. Now, I hope everybody is quite happy."

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed the Idea. "How can anyone be otherwise when he has fine ideas about John Quincy Adams and Madagascar and the hypotenuse of a triangle?"

"Or when one can make people split their sides over funny verses like

"Pumpkins and pins
And puppy-dog shins

or

"Carpet-tacks and crows
And caterpillars' toes!"

cried the Jester.

"Then I must get back to my work of weighing the stars," declared the Sage, "and I hope I shall not be pestered with any more questions."

THE SAPIENT SAGE

Lucile, who had been thinking hard the last few minutes, spoke up. "Please, Sir Sage, before you go to figuring on the stars, we must get back to the Purple City and to Chicago. Is there any way we can take without going through all the adventures we have had in Gloom City and Cloud Land and the Dismal Darks?"

"That's a question!" snapped the Sage, very crossly. "I shall answer no more questions."

"Dear, dear!" wailed Lucile. "We shall have to go through all the dreadful story-telling and climb over the rainbow and be bitten by the Gigantic Germs again."

"I don't care—everything will be such a beautiful, rosy red," said Jupiter. "But what is that?"

All raised their heads at the clear, ringing sound of bugles, coming louder and louder from the direction of the Land of Laughs and Tears. Then suddenly from around a jutting rock a party of horsemen galloped into view.

"The King, the King!" shouted the Jester.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

The bugles blew yet more loudly, and the horsemen, coming up at full tilt, drew rein before the great rock.



“At last—all hail to Lucile!” roared King Danno.
“Queen Sugar-and-Spice-and-Everything-Nice the

THE SAPIENT SAGE

Fourteenth, of the Land of Why. Let all her loving subjects bend the knee. Hail, hail—all hail!"

The horsemen, springing from their foaming steeds, bowed sweepingly before Lucile, who drew back in dismay.

"But I do not wish to be Queen Sugar-and-Spice or any other kind of queen," she cried. "I don't see why you don't pick some one else to rule the Kingdom of Why. There's the Sage—and all the courtiers—and the Jester—and—"

"Hoity-toity!" interrupted the King. "We can't have just anybody for ruler of Why. And you're the one I choose. But what have you been doing here? And has the Sapient Sage answered all your questions?"

"He will answer but one question," answered Nic-Nac. "But from asking one question I have learned enough to change me from a very Foolish Idea into one so wise as to talk of Martin Van Buren, the aurora borealis, appendicitis, the Solomon Islands, latitude and

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

longitude, and anything else with a long word that you might suggest."

"And he has taught me to be a really funny Jester," exclaimed the striped rubber man. "Listen, King Danno, who never laughed at jest of mine:

"Old King Danno was a gloomy, old soul,
And a gloomy, old soul was he.
He bawled o'er his pipe
And he bawled o'er his bowl
And he bawled at his Jester's gay-e-tee."



"Hey-hey-ho! Hi-hee-hee! Ho-ho-ho!" cackled the King of Why. "That's the only good joke you ever made. Ho-ho-ho! Hey-hi-hee!"

THE SAPIENT SAGE

The King ceased suddenly and became very grave. "Come to think of it," he said solemnly, "I should like to ask one question myself, Sir Sapient Sage. Maybe in your wonderful wisdom you can tell me how to be happy, how to attain that perfect joy and peace for which I have sought in vain all my life?"

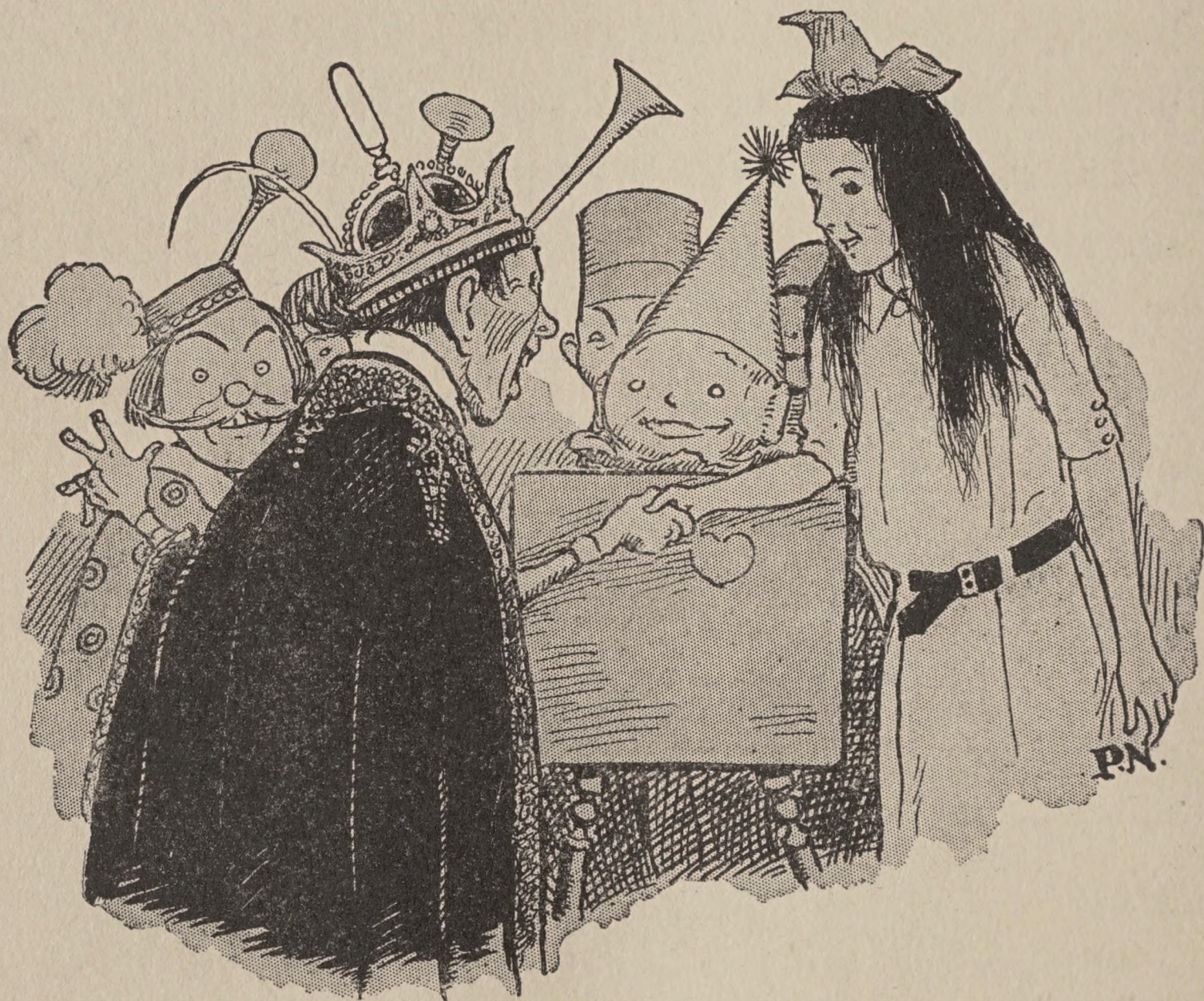
The unhappy King of Why began to cry so that it was necessary for the Imperial Drier of the Royal Tears to rush up with his crimson handkerchief of state. "Boo-hoo!" wailed the King. "Unhappy me—miserable me! Tell me this, Sir Sage, can I ever, ever be happy like other mortals?"

The Sapient Sage spoke very gravely. "You can be happy, King Danno, only when you decide to be a real king and to govern wisely and well. You can not be happy by shoving your problems upon some one else. Duty well-performed is the happiness of kings."

"Peppermint and pickles!" exclaimed the King, slapping his thigh. "I wonder I never thought of that. Then Lucile will not have to be Queen of Why, after all. And I must be King and do my duty—and thus

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

be happy ever after. What a fine thing that I chased Lucile across the kingdom! How glad I am that I came! Blow great blows on the bugles! Hoo-ray! All hail to King Danno! Blow, blow!"



The royal buglers blew into their golden instruments until the air rang with the sound. The King strutted about shaking hands with the amazed and relieved

THE SAPIENT SAGE

Lucile, with the Sage, with the courtiers and any one who would listen to the tale of his new happiness. And then, as the royal buglers rested from their mighty bugling, the far-away sound of other bugles came to their ears. Another party of horsemen dashed around the point of rock and up to the King. Dismounting, the heralds—for such they were—threw themselves at the feet of the now-happy King Danno.

“Oh, King!” they cried. “The Topsy-Turvies have invaded the Purple City and have turned everything upside-down!”

CHAPTER XIX

VERY BAD NEWS

The entire party was thrown into a state of great consternation at the heralds' announcement of the dreadful invasion of the Purple City by the Topsy-Turvies. In fact, the Imperial Driers of the Royal Tears were already advancing toward King Danno, feeling that under the stress of such tidings he would shed at least a tubful, when the King waved them back.

"No, no," he cried, "this is in all truth very bad news. But, as I am King of Why, I have now a most serious duty to perform. The Sage declares that the greatest happiness is in the performance of duty. Therefore I shall be very happy. Now tell me, heralds, just what has happened in our good Purple City."

The leader of the heralds bowed his face to

VERY BAD NEWS

the ground. "Everything is upside-down, oh, King—the mountains, the molasses-pitchers, the ink-bottles, the trees. The churches all stand upon their steeples with the doors high in the air. The chairs and beds are inverted so that nobody can sit or sleep any more. The books and newspapers are bottom-up so that none but a Chinaman could read them. Even the lakes and ponds are upside-down and all the water has fallen out."



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Chocolate-drops and clam chowder!" roared King Danno. "We must get back, and that right away before all the sky gets upside-down and there will be no more rain or sunshine. But there are many lands to be passed through, and it would be weeks before we could reach the Purple City. Is there no quicker way, Sir Sage?"

The Sage frowned angrily. "You have had your question," he growled. "You can ask no more."

"You ask him," the King said to the herald, and the herald repeated the King's question.

"There is a quicker way to return," said the Sapient Sage, yawning like a man greatly bored. "Back of this rock is the Weird Cranny of the Witches, where is kept the Aerial Torpedo in which the journey could be made through the air in less time than it would take to say some of the long words that I know. In that land also is kept the Golden Key by means of which ages and ages ago the Queen of the Witches locked the Gypsy-Turvies upside-down. By turning this key in some lock, of which I know nothing, the Queen-Witch

VERY BAD NEWS

succeeded in turning upside-down all the Topsy-Turvies, who walk on their heads because they have it to do, and not at all because they like it. If we could obtain the Golden Key and could find the lock in which it works, you would be able to make the Topsy-Turvies walk upright like other people, and then their spell over the Purple City would be broken. As to where this lock is, however, I do not know."

The King turned to another of the heralds. "You haven't asked any questions yet," he said. "Ask the Sage how we are to find the Weird Cranny of the Witches with its aerial torpedoes and its keys of gold."

The second herald repeated the King's question to the Sapient Sage, who sat a long time before replying. When he did so he heaved a long, drawn-out sigh.

"I will go with you to the Witch Cranny, King Danno, and endeavor to find for you the torpedo and the key. I will even return with you to the Purple City and see what can be done toward quelling these Topsy-Turvy invaders. That is, I will go on one condition. There must be a royal edict that no more

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

foolish questions shall be put to me, under pain of banishment from Why. I don't mind common sense, honest questions such as the Idea's and the Jester's. But I find that even here on this rock I am not safe from inquisitive persons. I have had eight or ten questions put to me within the last hour—and Lucile's was rather foolish, to want to know the age of an old philosopher like me. I get very lonely here, and if you will do this, I will go."

The King nodded to the High and Mighty Recorder of the Royal Whims and Whimsies, who wrote briskly on a piece of parchment. Then the heralds sounded the golden bugles, and the Chief of the Heralds bawled the edict:

"Oyez, oyez! Hearken to the 567th decree of King Danno of Why, the Ex-Unhappy.

"It is hereby proclaimed that Sir Sapient Sage is hereafter and forever excused from the answering of foolish, silly and senseless questions; and all who insist upon the propounding of said foolish, silly and senseless questions shall be banished from our good land of Why.

VERY BAD NEWS

“Be it further proclaimed that there is no objection to the putting of wise and honest questions to the Sapient Sage. On the contrary, the asking of such questions is to be encouraged as tending to increase the learning and knowledge of the citizens of Why.



“Be it further proclaimed that, inasmuch as there may be times when citizens will be honestly perplexed as to whether a question be wise or foolish, it is hereby decreed that Nic-Nac, once

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

known as the Foolish Idea, is appointed Imperial Judge and Arbiter of the Wisdom or Foolishness of questions, it being deemed that, by reason of his recent change from a Foolish Idea to a Wise Idea, he is especially qualified for duties of this nature.

“Given under my hand, this 14th day of the 1st Moon in the Month of Marshmallows.

“(Signed) DANNO.”

The reading of this surprising decree brought a great rush of congratulations to Nic-Nac, who was so affected by his new honors that he almost wept. The Sapient Sage was also much affected.

“It is the best thing that could possibly have happened,” declared the Sage. “Now I can see my way to doing wonderful things for the Kingdom of Why by answering all the questions that people ought really to have answered, whereas heretofore all my time has been taken up with silly, profitless inquiries. And no one should be better qualified to judge between wise and foolish ideas than Nic-Nac, since he has been both.”

After all present had congratulated the Sage and Nic-Nac, the former declared they had best be off to the Witch Cranny, which he explained lay to the south

VERY BAD NEWS

about five miles. A column was formed, the Sage leading with the heralds, and the soldiers of Why bringing up the rear. King Danno insisted on Lucile's mounting a beautiful, snow-white horse, equipped with the richest trappings, and insisted that she do him the honor of riding by his side.

"In all my reign I have never been so happy," he confided, after they had set forth. "After this, I shall always be seeking for new duties."

And behind her she heard the others talking.

"Nero fiddled while Rome burned—Peary discovered the North Pole—thirty days hath September. What beautifully wise ideas I now have, and how happy I am!" murmured Nic-Nac.

"Hi-diddle-doodle,
My lady's French poodle
The barber cut off his tail.
The north wind froze
The end of his nose,
And the pound-keeper put him in jail,"

sang the Jester.

"What a bright and cheery red is the whole wide world," Jupiter was muttering.

CHAPTER XX

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

After an hour's riding through pleasant valleys, the travelers espied a column of thick smoke curling lazily up from behind a clump of trees upon the top of a high hill.

"That is the great, central cauldron of the witches," the Sage explained. "There is where all the charms, philters, potions, poisons, spells and magic are made. They will probably be very busy to-day."

Before they had ridden much farther, they were met by a withered, old lady, wearing a black, peaked hat, a white apron and blue goggles, and riding astride a broom. The old lady conducted them up a long, winding, stony path to a great cavern where a hundred witches were busily engaged in eating cheese. What most puzzled Lucile was the fact that they took but a

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

bite or so at a piece of cheese, then laid it down and seized another piece, to go through the same process, without seeming to swallow anything.

“Ho, Mother Winnie Witch,” cried the Sage, addressing a still older and more withered hag, who sat upon a raised throne at the back of the cavern. “What witches’ work are you occupied with to-day?”



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"It is hole-day," the Mother Witch croaked in a hoarse, dismal voice. "There are a lot of holes needed in this world, and we are making them—Swiss-cheese holes, sieve-holes, grindstone-holes, post-holes, porous-plaster-holes, bung-holes, sink-holes, lattice-porch-holes and other holes."

Then Lucile saw that each piece of cheese, when taken up by a witch, was smooth and solid, but that, after the hag had taken a bite at it, the cheese was full of holes, like the Swiss cheese for which her mother had often sent her to the groceries. Over in another corner of the cavern was stacked a great collection of sheets of tin, which another band of witches was biting full of holes in order to make sieves.

But the cauldron in front of the cavern was the busiest scene. Here the greater part of the witches were at work, dipping great, round stones into the huge cauldron. After the stones had been thoroughly softened in the smelly mixture, big holes were bitten out of the center, converting them into grindstones. Other witches were plunging barrels into the great

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

kettle, after which they would bite bung-holes in the sides. These witches, Lucile observed, had but one tooth, ranging in size from a tiny, sharp tooth for the witches who were biting holes in needles, to great, powerful tusks for the hags who were piercing the grindstones. Another group of the witches, however, was equipped with dozens and dozens of teeth, and these were biting holes in poultice-plasters to make them porous, or in boards for conversion into lattice-work. It was certainly very surprising to see holes made in this manner.

After they had made their round of the cavern, the party assembled before the seat of the Mother Witch, who addressed the Sapient Sage.

"Why do you come into my domains, Sir Sapient Sage? What is your business in the Weird Cranny of the Witches?"

The Sage pointed toward Nic-Nac, who stood at his right. "According to the 567th decree of King Danno of Why, you must get the opinion of Sir Nic-Nac as to the wisdom or foolishness of your question," he advised.

THE KINGDOM OF WHY



“That is a very wise question,” the Idea ruled gravely. “As ruler of the witches, it is her duty to know why strangers invade her country; you must answer as she desires.”

“Then we have come seeking the Aerial Torpedo and the Golden Key of Magic, oh, Mother,” answered the Sage.

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

The Mother Witch showed her sharp, white teeth in a terrible grin. "And what do you want with my precious possessions, the Aerial Torpedo, which whizzes o'er land and sea, and the Golden Key of Marvelous Magic, oh, Sage?"

"Wise," the Idea decided instantly. "As keeper of these wonderful treasures, she is entitled to know why they are borrowed."

The Sapient Sage explained the objects and purposes of their journey. The Mother Witch grinned evilly and shook her head in a way that frightened Lucile, who could see that they would not obtain their desires very readily.

"We have here the Torpedo and the Key," croaked the Witch, "but why should we give them to you, with whom we have nothing in common, and who, although our neighbor for many weeks, have never come a-visiting nor gossiped over the back fence, nor sent us any good thing from your Sunday dinners?"

It took Nic-Nac several minutes to decide as to such a peculiar question, but he finally ruled that it was

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

wise, as she should know everything about the lending of the precious treasures. The Sage pondered some time before giving his answer.

“The best reason I know is that maybe I could give you some very valuable information in exchange for your treasures,” he said finally.

At this the witches became tremendously excited and Lucile began to feel that their mission would be successful, after all. The witches left their hole-work and crowded about the Mother Witch for a whispered council of some minutes. After this, it was announced that they would lend the Torpedo and the Key in exchange for the answer to one question, subject, of course, to the ruling of the Idea. Thereupon the Sapient Sage assumed a knowing pose and awaited the question.

“How can we succeed in making holes in the deep, blue sea, oh, Sage?” asked the Mother Witch.

“Foolish,” Nic-Nac decided promptly. “For, if holes were made in the sea, all the water would run out.”

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

"Then how can we make holes in the air?" asked the Mother Witch.

"That also is a foolish question," decided the Idea, "for, if there were holes in the air, you would fall into them when riding witch-fashion on your brooms across the sky."

At this there was another earnest whispering on the part of the witches, after which the Mother Witch spoke again:

"How can we old and ugly hags become fair and beautiful like the little girl you have with you?"

The Idea thought deeply for a long time. "In my opinion," he said finally, "that is a wise question. Although these witches do a great deal of useful work making holes and things, there is a feeling against them, due mainly to their unfortunate appearance, which leads many people to think the witches are wholly evil. Now, if they were young and fair like Lucile, the feeling against them would disappear, and thus their usefulness to mankind would be greatly increased."

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

The Sage, after nodding his approval of the Idea's decision, pondered for some time. Then he drew from his bosom a small piece of folded paper. "In this paper," he said, "is a powder which, if swallowed to the tune of 'Eenie-Meenie-Minie-Mo,' will convert all your witches into young and beautiful fairies. See that you use your new talents well."

There was a great clapping of hands from the witches. "Fine—splendid!" they shouted. "We have always desired to be fairies, but little dreamed that it would come to pass."

"This is indeed precious advice," declared the Mother Witch, "and I am truly glad you came to Witch Cranny. Now I will conduct you to the Aerial Torpedo."

With that she led the party without the cavern to a level stretch of ground where lay a great, cigar-shaped affair higher than a man's head and as long as a railway coach. It was made of pure gold and bore upon the sides in bright, red letters the words:

"THE DIZZY HEIGHTS LINE, LIMITED."

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

There were several windows, with a door at one end, through which the Mother Witch conducted them. Lucile was surprised to find the inside of the air-ship lined with velvet cushions and fitted with the richest furniture. There were books and pictures and toys and food and everything else that a person could wish for a journey.

“Here is the gravity that you throw overboard when you wish to rise,” explained the Mother Witch, indicating some canvas sacks. “And here are the steering-levers, by which you go north, south, east, west or sky-crooked. Here is the speedometer, which shows how rapidly the Torpedo is traveling. You must be careful not to go faster than the aerial speed-limit, which is ten miles a minute in sunshine and one mile in five minutes through clouds and fog. And here is the Golden Key, although I can not tell you where is the lock into which you must fit it to conquer the Topsy-Turvies.”

She drew from her bosom a large key of solid gold,

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

set with sparkling gems, and handed it to the Sage. "Good-by," she said, "and a pleasant journey."

The next minute the torpedo was rising rapidly as the Idea and the Jester tossed the gravity bags overboard. Lucile looked from a window and beheld the witches' cave already but a speck far below. The next minute they whizzed through a lot of damp mist, which the Sage said was a cloud, and then they shot into a



THE WITCHES' CRANNY

glorious, sunlit space. The Sage turned a brass lever and the Torpedo poked its golden nose closer to the ground so that Lucile could see distinctly many of the strange scenes through which she had passed so slowly and so toilsomely in her flight from King Danno.

There to the right was the miserable City of Gloom, and they could hear the sighs of the inhabitants coming up like a wailing wind. Opposite lay the fair city of Joyville, and they could hear the citizens laughing and singing. Farther on they made out the Land of Dreadful Story-Telling, where they could well imagine that people were saying the sea was of ink and the sky of soap-suds; and beyond that they made out Professor Mighty Wise and his companions at their eternal problems.

Next they heard the sweet, clear strains that floated up from every little movement in the Musical Land of Mezzo. And then they could see nothing at all, by which sign they knew they hovered over Invisible Land. After this, they made out the green and blue and pink pools of dreams, and beyond these the great Lake of

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Clouds, with all the rain-clouds and wind-clouds and other clouds floating upward. Then came the gorgeous arch of the Rainbow; and then the Rhymoes, making jingles of pigs and twigs and figs; and then the Gigantic Germs from whom they had so narrowly escaped. Then everything turned black—black as jet, ink, tar, or a blackboard—as they passed through the Dismal Darks. After this, they whizzed above Word Land, where they saw the Word-Makers setting up a new word—AUTO-PHYSIC-LOGY—which the Sage explained probably meant the science of getting well without having to take squills, paregoric or other nasty medicines. And then they shot above Idea Land, and the Idea, happy in his new-found wisdom, wept just the least bit for his old home and fellow Ideas. Finally they whizzed over a river and sighted the Purple City.

But a sadly-changed Purple City it was. The beautiful chocolate-cream and peppermint-stick trees stood upon their branches, their roots waving feebly in the air. The movable sidewalks were suspended in the air, with the seats and couches hanging down. The

THE WITCHES' CRANNY

churches were inverted, the towers resting upon the ground. The whole splendid city was upside-down, its magnificent arches and domes and spires upon the ground, with the steps and foundations high in the air. Everywhere, on every hand, the Topsy-Turvies hopped upon their heads, their big feet dangling and waving above them. The fact that they walked upon their heads did not seem to bother them at all. Indeed, some were jumping across entire streets, alighting upon their heads without so much as a wobble.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HEAD-HOPPERS OF THE PURPLE CITY

The Sapient Sage pulled at a lever and the Aerial Torpedo settled slowly and gracefully. As they neared the blue ground, the Topsy-Turvies came head-hopping from all directions, and within a few moments they had landed on the great plain before the Purple City and in the midst of an excited army of the invaders.

"We'll remain inside the Torpedo a bit to see how they behave toward company," remarked the Sage, peering through the thick, glass windows.

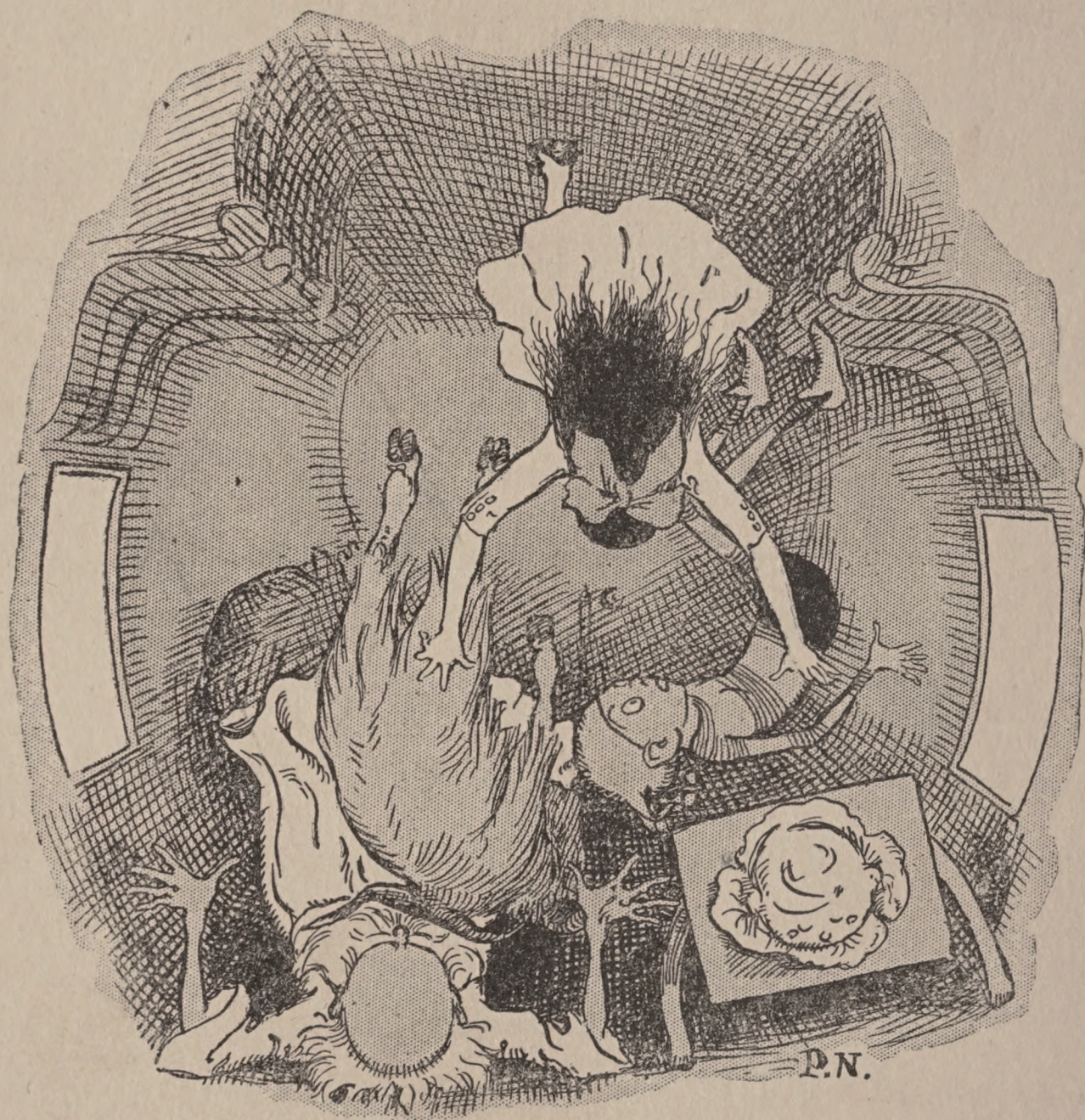
Before he had finished speaking, one end of the Torpedo began to rise from the ground.

"Quick, quick—let us ascend!" cried the Jester. "They are turning the Torpedo upside-down!"

The Sage grabbed at the gravity bags to toss them

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

overboard, but it was already too late. The front end of the Torpedo rose swiftly; then the whole air-ship seemed to jump, and the next second they were in a



heap on what had been the roof of the Torpedo, but which was now the floor. The chairs and the other beautiful furniture hung upside-down above their

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

heads. It was clear there was no possibility of getting back to the upper air.

The Sage scrambled to his feet, rearranging his long beard. "We had as well get out," he said. "It may be that we can reason with them."

They patted their clothes into place and, following the Sage, climbed out through the inverted doorway. In an instant, they found themselves in the midst of a howling, hopping mob of Topsy-Turvies. To Lucile, it was a queer sight, indeed, to see so many people standing on their heads, eating, pointing or saluting with their hands while their feet pounded together in the air as a crowd of every-day people would clap its hands at an election or a circus. The Jester reached down and held her up. As far as she could see, there were feet, feet—an ocean of kicking, dangling feet. The one Lucile knew must be King of the Topsy-Turvies had the most peculiar face. His nose was twice as large as an ordinary Topsy-Turvy's and there was but one nostril. His mouth, instead of running across the lower part of his face, ran from his nose to

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

his chin. As she wondered at this, the King head-hopped up to the Sage.

"Who are you?" he demanded, in an extremely gruff voice.

"A wise question," ruled the Idea. "As invader of the Purple City, it's his business to know who enters the country."

"I am the Sapient Sage," replied the old philosopher, putting on a bold front, "and these are my friends and fellow travelers returning to their homes in the Purple City to find them sadly disturbed in their absence."

"Oho!" bawled the Royal Topsy-Turvy. "And one of your friends and companions looks mightily like King Danno!"

The King of the Topsy-Turvies executed three great circles with his feet. "Presto-pickles-reverse-positions-poppeldor-change!" he bawled.

Instantly Lucile, without any notion of doing anything of the sort, turned a half-somersault. As soon as her head ceased swimming, she realized that she was standing on its crown. Beside her were the Sage, the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Jester and the Idea, looking very, very ridiculous in the same unaccustomed position. To her right was Jupiter, standing upon his two horns. A little farther off the King of Why and his heralds and soldiers reposed in the same awkward position. They had been completely Topsy-Turvied.

“Conduct the prisoners to the guard-house!” bawled the King of the Topsy-Turvies, and immediately a squad of the Topsy-Turvy soldiers surrounded the party.

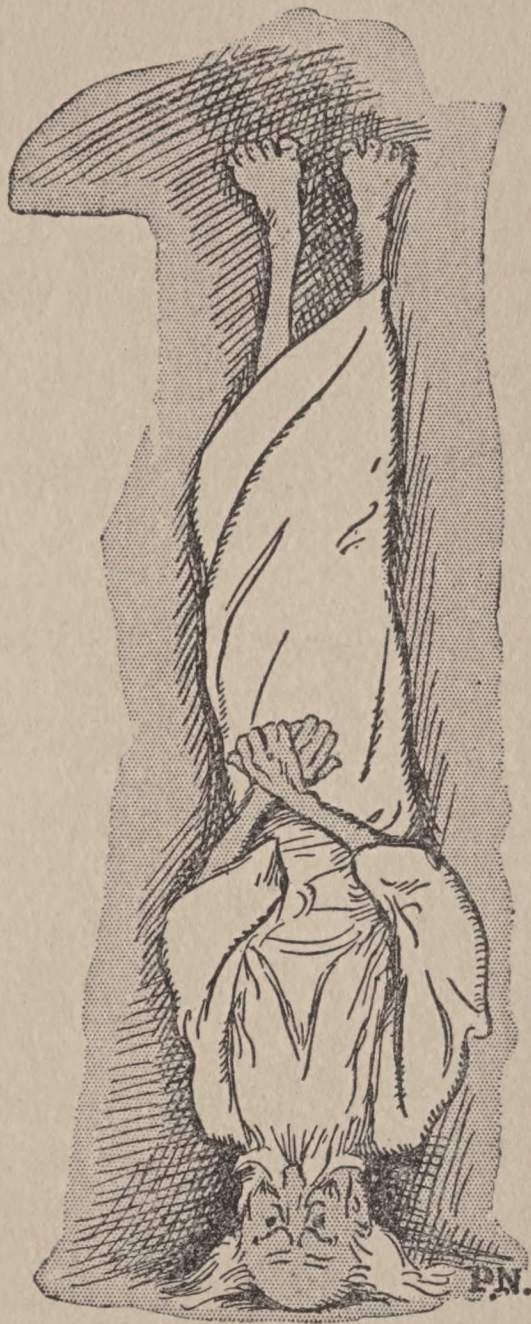
Lucile supposed she would have to be carried, but, seeing the Sage and the others hop off after the guards, she put forth an effort and found that she could hop upon her head about as easily as she had always been able to walk on her feet. In fact, she did not feel at all uncomfortable, although she knew she must look very ridiculous, and she hoped sincerely that she was not to go head-hopping all her life.

The guards conducted them to a square, stone house which stood upside-down just without the turquoise walls of the Purple City. They supplied the prisoners

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

with meat and biscuits sticking to the bottom of some upside-down plates, and left them.

"I don't see how we are to eat at all," wailed Lucile.



"Our mouths are next to the ground, and our food will have to go up instead of down."

"But the biscuits are upside-down also," said the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Sage, "so that they will only be going in the right direction for them."

After they had eaten, the Sage stood on his head in one corner and remained very quiet. Lucile thought the old giant had gone to sleep, but after a bit she saw that his eyes were not closed, and she knew he must be thinking very deeply. She hoped very much that the wise, old Sage would be able to think of some plan of escape from their present hopeless, hoppy condition. Indeed, for the first time since leaving Chicago, she became really sad. All along she had felt that, after seeing the Sage and asking her questions, there would be no difficulty in returning to the Purple City and then, with the help of the aero-cow, to Chicago. But now they were prisoners—even the King of Why and his soldiers and the wise, old Sage were prisoners. And such prisoners, standing silly-wise upon the crowns of their heads! Dear, dear! Was there ever little girl placed in such a hopeless situation? If her Daddy—who was also wise, wiser probably than the Sage, for

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

one must be very wise to be a specialist—were only here, there might be a way out. But—

She was aroused by a whisper from the Sage. "Come on, Lucile. We are going out to search for the lock in which the Magic Key works."

The Magic Key! Lucile had forgotten everything about the Golden Key of the witches. At the thought, her heart leaped wildly. Then she remembered that the key was of no use to them unless they could find the lock in which it turned. And what chance was there of finding the lock in this upside-down country of upside-down people?

Outside, where it had become quite dark, the Jester, the Idea and King Danno awaited them. There were no guards at the door of the prison, but a knot of Topsy-Turvy soldiers slept a short distance off. As they hopped swiftly over the plain, through the open gateway of the Purple City and along its streets, they saw that practically all the Topsy-Turvies were asleep. Secure in their occupation of the city, they doubtless felt no need to keep night watch. Occasionally they

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

passed Topsy-Turvies who were stirring about, but these paid no attention to Lucile and her companions.

After hopping half an hour, the Sage stopped at the great, golden door of the royal palace. Here, too, the guards slept soundly. The door swung back on its hinges and the comrades hopped in unchallenged and unmolested. A grating noise startled Lucile, but she realized it was only the Topsy-Turvies snoring. Along the dim corridors they slipped and into the great throne-room and even up to the splendid throne itself. On the throne King Bil-Bil, ruler of the Topsy-Turvies, was huddled upside-down and snoring loudly through his queer nose of one nostril. Lucile stood, her heart going pit-a-pat, while the Sage slipped noiselessly about, trying the Golden Key in satchels, doors, boxes, baggage, portmanteaus, desks, anything and everything where a hole or an opening appeared. He even tried the holes in the lace curtains and the cracks in the plastering, but the Magic Key would not work. Finally the Sage approached the throne with the idea of trying the key in a hole in the King's belt. He was working at

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

this when a loud and angry voice sounded through the half-darkened throne-room.

“Who’s there?”

The Sage stiffened instantly. Lucile held her breath while her heart went pit-a-pat, very, very fast.

“What ho — guards — lights — thieves—villains!”



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

roared the voice again, this time coming plainly from King Bil-Bil, who was now hopping down from the throne.

Instantly the great room filled with Topsy-Turvy soldiers. The Jester, the Idea and King Danno were seized and bound. The Sapient Sage was dragged, struggling and kicking, before King Bil-Bil. He had time, however, to slip the Magic Key into the hands of Lucile, who, knowing nothing else to do with it, hid it in her bosom. The next minute she was forced by the increasing crowd out of the throne-room. The last thing she made out in all the uproar was the announcement that the Sage and his fellow prisoners would be beheaded at noon of the next day.

Lucile, having no other place to go, wandered back to the prison-house by the turquoise wall and, standing on her head in a corner, wept for half an hour. If ever, beneath the blue sky, there lived a little girl who had the right to cry, it certainly was Lucile Lawrence. She was doomed to stand on her head all her life, which alone was sufficient to make grown men, strong lions,

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

or even wise specialists cry. Then her only friends in this Topsy-Turvy country were to have their heads chopped off the next day, and she could not but suppose that as soon as they took the trouble to think about her, the Topsy-Turvies would—but, this was too horrible to think about. Then finally, in case she should not meet the fate of the Sage and her other dear friends, what hope had she of ever getting back to earth, to Chicago, to her mama, and her Daddy? She knew nothing of the cow's whereabouts, or whether she was near the Purple City at all, or even if she still existed. If the cow was in the Purple City, she was probably upside-down, and not even the Cow-that-Jumped-over-the-Moon could hope to fly upside-down. At last, too utterly miserable to produce any more tears, she fell asleep.

When Lucile awakened, the sun was high in the sky. She head-hopped out in front of the stone house and watched the Topsy-Turvies at their work and play. She had not been there ten minutes when her attention was attracted by a party of gaily-clad Topsy-Turvies

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

marching past to a great blowing of trumpets. Just in front of the prison the party halted. Some great Top-sy-Turvy was being escorted without the walls of the city and Lucile edged in for a closer view. It was King Bil-Bil. Her eyes dwelt in fascination on the King's big, round hole of a nose and on his mouth, which ran up and down over his face instead of across it. What a peculiar thing it was. It reminded her of something, although she could not think just what this something might be. What was it? What was it? The party marched ahead, trumpets blaring, flags flying. Lucile thought hard. Her head was almost aching, but still she struggled to remember. What—ah! An odd thought flashed through her brain and she hurried after the royal procession.

They were bound to view the wreck of the Aerial Torpedo, which lay upside-down on the blue sward a short distance off. Lucile, hopping briskly, overtook them by the time they reached the wreck. No one paid any attention to her and she edged in close to King Bil-Bil. She wished to get another good look at his face,

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

at the peculiar face which reminded her of the thing that had just come to her. The Royal-High-Explainer-of-Things-That-Happen was speaking, however, and the listening King kept his up-and-down mouth closed so tightly as to prevent her from seeing what she wished. Finally the King opened his mouth to reply.

“This is the Aerial Torpedo of Witch Cranny. I saw it once—”

He got no further. Lucile, springing forward the instant he opened his mouth, had clapped the Golden Key into his face, the rounded end of the key into his great single nostril and the lower portion into his up-and-down mouth.

“Hel-l-lp! Mur-r-r-der = mur — gurgle—gurgle!” went King Bil-Bil, but Lucile, taking both hands, turned and turned desperately at the key. Guards jumped forward and pulled at her arms, but she held on just for a moment and turned, turned, turned.

And then something happened. Lucile felt herself execute a half-somersault, and for the first time since their imprisonment she stood upright on her two good

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

feet. King Bil-Bil had turned also, the Golden Key still dangling rakishly from his surprised countenance. And all the Topsy-Turvies had turned. The Aerial Torpedo stood right side up. Beyond the mob the domed and minareted Purple City sat square and firm upon her foundations. The trees, the sidewalks, the lamp-posts were erect and natural once more. Lucile had found the lock into which the Golden Key of Magic fitted. The Purple City was saved. The Topsy-Turvies were redeemed from their upside-down bondage. A great cheer arose, growing in volume until it became deafening. The rescued Topsy-Turvies began to dance, to sing, to clap their hands. Lucile, expecting some dreadful punishment, stood amazed at the joy and exultation she had brought about. And then she became aware of the deep, hoarse voice of King Bil-Bil calling for quiet. At first, his commands made no impression on the happy mob, but gradually the noise diminished until finally all was quite still. Then the King approached Lucile.

THE HEAD-HOPPERS

"All hail to Lucile!" he cried. "She has delivered us from the dreadful bondage of Topsy-Turvydom."

"All hail—all hail to Lucile!" cried a thousand voices.

"She shall be Queen Lucile, the Dear Deliverer of all



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

the Topsy-Turvies, and reign in my stead," announced the King.

"No, no, no!" cried Lucile. "I am glad that I delivered you, and I hope that you will always remain delivered. But I will not be Queen of the Topsy-Turvies. I have been running away from the queenship of Why for weeks and weeks. Everybody wants to make me a queen. But I will not be one—so there!"

King Bil-Bil laughed heartily. "All right, Lucile," he replied, "you do not have to be Queen, but you can have anything you wish in Topsy-Turvydom. And now I propose three cheers and a lallapaloozer for Lucile, our Dear Deliverer."

Lucile had to put her fingers into her ears to keep from being deafened.

CHAPTER XXII

THE END OF IT ALL

That night Lucile attended the imposing ceremony by which the Jester, the Idea and the Sage were installed in their new positions. To the clamor of the golden bugles the Jester was proclaimed Fun-maker Extraordinary and Poet Laughter-ate of the Kingdom of Why. In his speech of acceptance of this important post, he recited riddles and quibs and verses based on the foolish ideas he had received in exchange from Nic-Nac, putting the entire court in an uproar of merriment. The applause so delighted the Jester that he bounced from floor to ceiling.

The Sage was initiated as High and Mighty Solver of Puzzles and Perplexities, and the Idea as the Imperial Judge and Arbiter of the Wisdom or Foolishness of Questions. During the Sage's absence from the

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

Purple City, the people had thought of a great many things they desired to know, so that there was now a great babble of questions:

“Why does a hyena laugh when no one is joking?”

“Why did Mr. Foster go to Gloster?”

“How old is Santa Claus?”

“Who killed Cock Robin?”

Nic-Nac decided as to the wisdom of the questions without the least hesitation and to the perfect satisfaction of all. He was immensely delighted with his new duties and confided to Lucile that he would always keep a place for her in his shiny brass heart as being the cause of his conversion into a Wise Idea. King Bil-Bil was present and accepted from the now happy King Danno the post of Governor of Right-Side-Up-With-Care-Land, as the domain of the former Topsy-Turvies would henceforth be called.

Lucile was greatly pleased at the happiness of her good friends and felt that her visit to Why had been well worth while. As the night grew, however, she became aware that she was very tired and sleepy and that

THE END OF IT ALL

she was becoming more and more anxious to see her parents, her home and her playmates. She had witnessed the marvelous scenes of the Kingdom of Why, she had saved the Purple City, she had rescued the Topsy-Turvies, had delivered the Sapient Sage from lonely exile and rendered happy King Danno, the Jester and Nic-Nac. She could do no more here. And she did so wish to see her mama knitting in the corner and her Daddy poring over the big, black books about oste—oste—osteology, or whatever it was. She had beheld so many strange things that she felt she would never need to bother him with questions any more. With these thoughts in her head, she approached the Sage.

“Please, Sir Sage, how can I get back to Chicago very soon?”

“Wise question,” decided Nic-Nac, “but a very sad one. For it must mean that Lucile is going to leave us.”

“Send for the Cow-Jump-over-the-Moon,” commanded the Sage; and within a few minutes the cow

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

stood smiling and nodding before Lucile. Her back was sleek and shiny, her goggles and barograph polished to a wonderful shimmer. Mounted upon both horns were the most powerful headlights.

"All aboard!" sang out the cow. "Passengers for Atmosphere, Sunrise, Star Land, Earth, Chicago and all points homeward!"

"This must be my cow-train," laughed Lucile, "for I am bound for those points."

"All aboard!" repeated the cow. "Starlight Limited—through service from the Purple City to Chicago, stopping at no way-stars, comets or stations. All aboard!"

Lucile, with the assistance of the Jester, climbed into the red-plush seat, while Jupiter hopped up behind.

"Good-by, Lucile!" called King Danno. "I am very happy in my new duties—thanks to you."

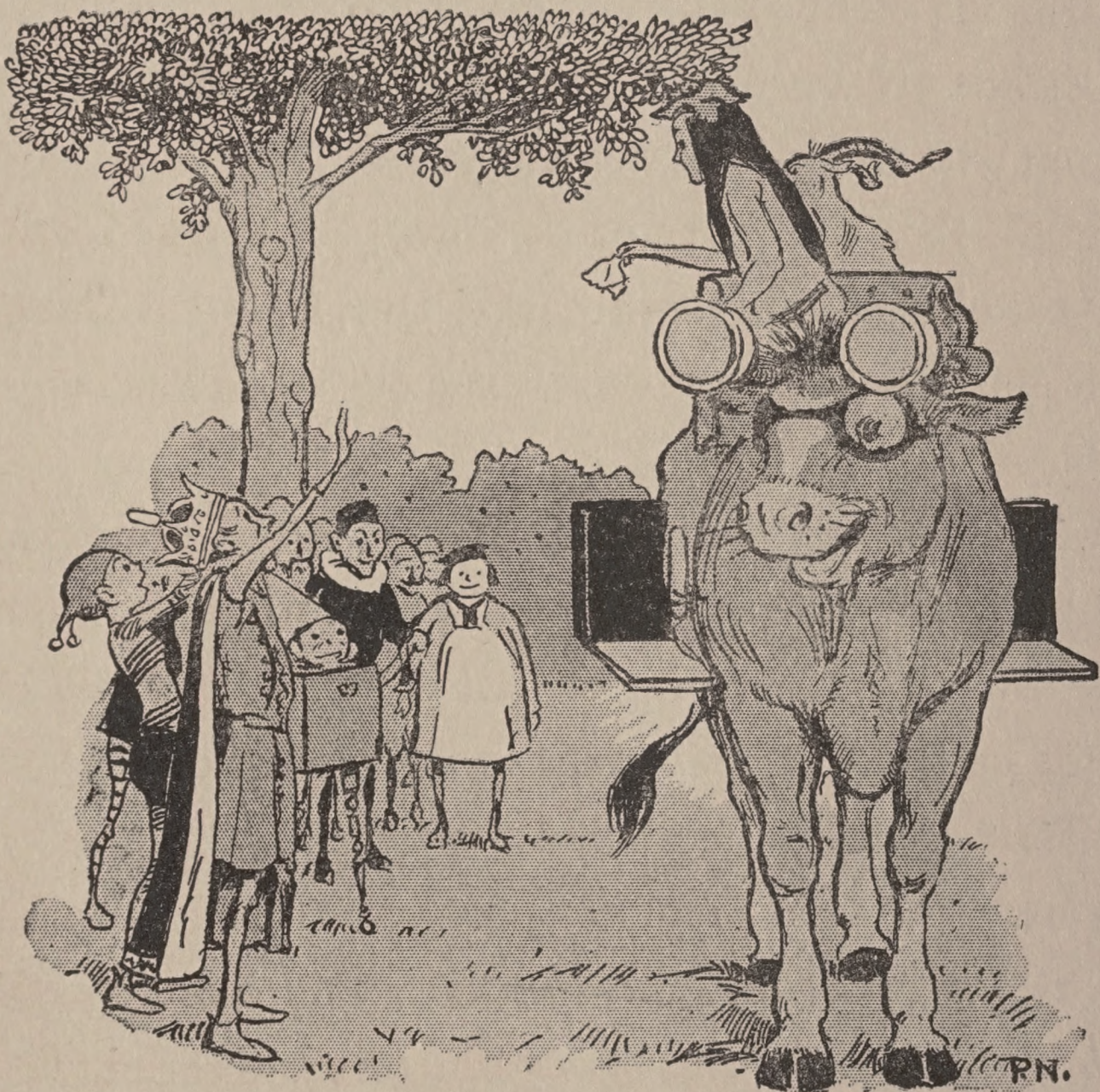
"Good-by, Lucile," cried the Sage. "I'm glad you brought me home again. Come and see us some time."

"Good-by!" said the Idea, weeping gently. "But for you I should never have been wise and serious."

THE END OF IT ALL

"Nor should I have been funny. Good-by, Lucile and Jupiter," spoke the Jester.

"Good-by, Lucile and Jupiter!" shouted all.
"Good-by. Come back soon. We'll send the cow for you."



THE KINGDOM OF WHY

"Good-by, good friends," answered Lucile and Jupiter, both much affected.

"All aboard!" shouted the cow, and started forward. In another minute she was passing out of the palace gates, the farewells of the crowd following them. Then the cow touched a spring with her tongue and the top of the seat rolled up around Lucile and her goat.

"You can go to sleep if you wish," said the cow. "You will be perfectly safe."

"Good night," said Lucile, drowsily.

"Good night," replied the cow, "and pleasant dreams."

The next thing Lucile knew, she was leaning from the kitchen window looking at Jupiter. She felt fresh and rested just as if she had not traveled hundreds of miles on a cow's back. The stars were out and she wondered how the cow could have made the return trip before daylight, and why the friendly animal had departed without saying good-by.

"Oh, Jupiter," she cried, "let's go in and see mama and Daddy!"

THE END OF IT ALL

Jupiter said nothing, but followed her inside, munching a red tomato-can wrapper. In the front room, Mrs. Lawrence sat crocheting the same pattern at which she was working when Lucile had last seen her. In the big armchair, her Daddy still frowned over the book of oste—oste—osteology, or something like that. At Lucile's entrance, they barely looked up, then went back to their work without taking the least notice of their little daughter.

"Why, mama and Daddy!" cried Lucile, running and throwing her arms about the neck of first one and then the other. "Aren't you glad to see me after I've been gone so long?"

"So long?" repeated her mother. "Why, child, weren't you in here an hour or so ago? I thought you were next door playing with Antoinette. You said something about it this afternoon."

"Dear—dear—what is that child wanting to know now?" asked her Daddy. When Lucile crept over to him, he put his arm about her neck and patted her

THE KINGDOM OF WHY

cheek. "Some of these days I'm going to take the time and answer every question you can think of," he said gently. "I was really very busy a bit ago when you asked me about King Solomon and the moon."

"But, but—" began Lucile. Then she stopped short and began to think. She knew that she had been in fairy realms of magic. While she was in the Kingdom of Why, she realized that the wondrous magicians of that land had made the time very long to her, when it seemed very brief to her parents. In fact, she remembered the Sapient Sage having pointed out the Land of Time away off to the right as they flew in the Aerial Torpedo back to the Purple City. And as her father was in the midst of a great word of fifteen or sixteen syllables and as her mother was busily crocheting, she decided she would not tell them of her wonderful adventures just now. A little later, when they had put aside their work and sleepy time was near, she would give them the whole wonderful story. So Lucile slipped over and kissed her mother on the right cheek and her Daddy on the left, because she was very,

THE END OF IT ALL

very glad to see them once more. Then she tiptoed out of the room.

"Bless the child's heart!" she heard her mother murmur. "Sometimes I think we don't pay enough attention to her."

"Yes," she heard her father answer, "yes; that's right. When I get rich and retire, I'm going to do nothing but play games with her and answer her questions. But I wonder what she meant by saying she had been away so long."

"I don't know," replied her mother.

Then Lucile slipped back into the kitchen and whispered wonderful things about the Purple City and the great bridge of the Rainbow and the Pink Pool of Dreams into Jupiter's ear. Jupiter, it seemed, had lost his power of speech and could not whisper back about the new and glorious redness of all the world.

But Jupiter knew.

THE END

638



7



